



CENTENARY EDITION

XII

THE  
LETTERS OF  
SIR WALTER SCOTT  
1831—1832  
AND APPENDICES OF  
EARLY LETTERS



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THE  
LETTERS OF  
SIR WALTER SCOTT  
1831—1832  
AND APPENDICES OF  
EARLY LETTERS

EDITED BY  
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ASSISTED BY  
DAVIDSON COOK

W M PARKER

*and others*

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LENDERS OF LETTERS PRINTED IN THIS  
VOLUME FROM ORIGINAL MANUSCRIPT

*The words in Italics are the shortened title of lender,  
as printed below each letter*

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*Stevenson*

J H Stevenson, Esq , K C , 9 Oxford Terrace,  
Edinburgh

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have been lent by Mr Stevenson for this Centenary  
Edition, are now in the National Library of Scotland,  
Edinburgh

*Texas, University of*

The Library of the University of Texas, Austin,  
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The Misses Thomson, Littledean, Colinton, Mid-  
lothian

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Stones, Ambleside, Westmorland

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U S A

PRINTED SOURCES OF LETTERS INCLUDED  
IN THIS VOLUME

---

*Audubon, Life of J J*

*The Life and Adventures of John James Audubon* Edited,  
from Materials supplied by his Widow, by Robert  
Buchanan London, 1868

*Autographic Mirror, 1865*

*The Autographic Mirror* Vol III London and New  
York, 1865

*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, 1833*

*Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, Vol xxxiii No cciii  
January, 1833

*Bodleian Quarterly Record*

*The Bodleian Quarterly Record*, Vol VII No 75  
Oxford, 1932

*Croker Papers*

*The Croker Papers The Correspondence and Diaries of  
the late Right Honourable John Wilson Croker* Edited by  
Louis J Jennings 3 vols London, 1884

*Doyle's Memoir of Susan Ferrier*

*Memoir and Correspondence of Susan Ferrier* Edited by  
John A Doyle London, 1898

*Hellman's Washington Irving*

*Washington Irving Esquire, Ambassador At Large from the  
New World to the Old* By George S Hellman  
London, [1925]

*Landseer's Life of William Bewick*

*Life and Letters of William Bewick* Edited by Thomas  
Landseer, A R A 2 vols London, 1871

*Lockhart*

*Memoirs of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, Bart* [By J G  
Lockhart] 7 vols Edinburgh, 1837-38, and  
second edition 10 vols Edinburgh, 1839

*Old Man's Diary, An*

*An Old Man's Diary, Forty Years Ago, for the First and  
Last Six Months of 1832 and 1833* [By John Payne  
Collier] Part IV Privately printed London, 1872

*Raeburn, Portraits by Sir Henry*

*Portraits by Sir Henry Raeburn photographed by Thomas  
Annan with Biographical Sketches* Edinburgh, [1873]

*Robberds's Life of Taylor of Norwich*

*The Life and Writings of William Taylor of Norwich* By  
J W Robberds Vol II London, 1843

1831

(*March 1831 continued*)

TO THE REV ALEXANDER DYCE,<sup>1</sup> LONDON

[Extract]

ABBOTSFORD, *March 31, 1831*

DEAR SIR,—I had the pleasure of receiving Greene's Plays, with which, as works of great curiosity, I am highly gratified. If the editor of the *Quarterly* consents, as he probably will, I shall do my endeavour to be useful, though I am not sure when I can get admission. I shall be inclined to include Webster, who, I think, is one of the best of our ancient dramatists, if you will have the kindness to tell the bookseller to send it to Whittaker, under cover to me, care of Mr Cadell, Edinburgh, it will come safe, and be thankfully received. Marlowe and others I have,—and some acquaintance with the subject, though not much.<sup>2</sup>

I wish you had given us more of Greene's prose works — I am, with regard, dear sir, yours sincerely,

[*Lockhart*]

WALTER SCOTT

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Dyce (1798-1869), educated at Edinburgh High School and Exeter College, Oxford, held two curacies, edited many of the Elizabethan dramatists, such as Greene (1831), Marlowe (1850), Shakespeare (1857), Webster and others. On 4th March, from "9 Gray's Inn Square, London," Dyce sends a letter with a copy of his Greene. Some persons have mistakenly thought that he had edited Marlowe, but "it was put through the press in a shamefully careless manner by a gentleman [G. Robinson in 1826], since dead, who had very little acquaintance with old writers." On 5th April he again writes to say that in sending his works he "had assuredly no hidden motives, of a critique on them in the *Quarterly Review* I never for a moment dreamed." He could supply Scott with ghost stories of a very modern date. "They all agree in one respect,—that the ghost was seen at the very time when the person, of whom it was the eidolon, lay at the point of death."  
—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> Omitted portions, dealing with his health and the ghost trial, repeat what has been given in other letters about this time.

TO ROBERT CADELL

MY DEAR SIR,—I return Southennan<sup>1</sup> three volumes I should like much to have a reading of Waterwitch Some confusion in returning the Sheets between Ballantyne & me have hankd the *tail* of the *Tales* It is now free As I do not wish to fail in the Count I am determind not to spare reading on Count Robert & am labouring through the Byzantine historians We must not miss stays if labour will do us right

Tis no[t] in mortals to command success  
But we'll do more Sempron[i]us we'll deserve it—

that is to say we will do our best to do so

I have not quite arranged my plan but there is certainly some wind in this bag if I can bring it into a tune I am  
Yours truly

W S

Tuesday [April 1831]<sup>2</sup>

[Stevenson]

TO JOHN WILSON CROKER, M P , KENSINGTON, LONDON

MY DEAR CROKER,—Like most great architects you have made a slight mistake in returning the scaffolding<sup>3</sup> My only complaint is a very trifling one Young's imitation of Johnson's criticism on Gray is not on my shelves, it is however a book long since printed and I will pick it up one day

What may be of more consequence the copy of Ascanius<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Southennan* By John Galt, 3 vols (1830)—one of two novels which Galt wrote immediately after his return from Canada in 1829—and *The Water Witch*, or, *The Summer of the Seas a Tale* By [J F Cooper], 3 vols (1830)

<sup>2</sup> See *Journal*, 5th April 1831

<sup>3</sup> The books borrowed by Croker in editing Boswell's *Johnson* See Vol XI, pp 119 and note 2, 151 and note 3 Young's *Criticism on the Elegy*, etc, appeared in 1783

<sup>4</sup> Halkett and Laing's *Dict of Anony and Pseudony Eng Lit* (1926), 1 p 151, gives *Ascanius, or the young adventurer, a true history* Translated from a manuscript privately handed about at the Court of Versailles, containing a particular

is not mine nor have I happened to see it so I suppose it is scarce MacNicol's remarks I have received safe I knew him a little and rememr his dining with my father and rather regarded him with awe at the time as a live author Again a new volume of Boswell's book does not call me master

Lockhart tells me great things of your warfare I would not perhaps have been so quiet But the Doctors have taken away my glass and reduced me to the state of the poor madman who notwithstanding that in his imagination he had the best of cooks and kept an excellent table every thing he ate tasted of porridge and milk the poor man getting nothing else I am not quite so bad but am earnestly preached to not to excite myself I would not stay from my own county meetings

I doubt that it will last over my time which will not be long I have failed too generally and suddenly

Let me know when or how I can send the books which are not mine It is hard that you who helped so many friends with your illimitable franks should ever need one yourself

My kind respects attend Mrs Croker and believe me always yours affectionately,

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD, MELROSE, 1 April 1831

[*Brotherton*]

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

[Extract]

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I beg your acceptance of a Bannatyne tract the evidence of a ghost on his own murder, the only one I suppose ever given Old Robert McIntosh who had been in the case pointed it out to me

*account of all that happened to a certain person [Prince Charles Edward Stuart] [By John Burton, M D], 8vo, London, 1746* Croker drew from this work for his *Boswell's Johnson* (1831), see his footnotes in vol II pp 416, 418, 421 Donald MacNicol's *Remarks, etc*, came out in 1779

when I was a boy and I have had my eye upon it ever since and there is something very affecting in the evidence of the murderd man's wife concerning the affectionate manner in which they part[e]d never to meet again <sup>1</sup> I have been laying anchors to leeward to peisuade Lord Stafford to print Sir Gawain and the Green Knight supposed to [be] written by Clerk of Tranent lamented in the poem of the Makers by Dunbar I have been woefully unwell—no not woefully for I have had neither ache nor pain but threatend with some uncanny kind of direction of blood to the Head which threatend me with a reunion with the auld makaris though unworthy I have got off for the present & on aperient pills & regiment as the young lady said when she proposed to join the 42 having several cousins in that gallant corps I am picking up however & ride every day that is to say I am carried about on a pony to which I do not *climb* like Spencer's champions but am lifted & travelld for about two or three miles about

I have all my life enjoyd luck In the meanwhile by way of passtime by way of amusement,

“Sedet æternumque sedebit  
Infelix Theseus,”

I have been sitting to Francis Grant who has won my applause by making a cabinet picture for your friend Lady Ruthven with two fine likenesses of my gallant hounds who are all that is worth painting in the subject <sup>2</sup>

So Jock Stevenson has gone to supply the Elysian shades

<sup>1</sup> On the 9th Sharpe acknowledges he has been struck in reading the ghost story by the fact that two witnesses were found to give evidence, a very unusual circumstance But he recalls the case of a boy crushed to death at Sadler's Wells when both mother and sister “declared before the coroner that they saw his apparition in the kitchen that evening, in consequence of which his mother went out to search for him” Sharpe had written to Henry Drummond at the time to make further enquiries but the latter was not in London He has however, preserved the newspaper in which the story is told—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> He repeats he has become the possessor of a first edition of *Satan's Invisible World* For “Jock Stevenson” see letter to Chambers, 7th March, and note, p 485

with first editions I suspect the latter used himself ill,  
I hate a drunken knave<sup>1</sup> I am always yours with true  
regard

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 5 April [1831]

I have good hope in the increasing mildness of the  
weather

[*Hornel*]

TO THE RIGHT HONOURABLE SIR SAMUEL SHEPHERD, BART

MY DEAR AND MUCH RESPECTED SIR SAMUEL,—I have  
long wished to place some trifle of mine of how little  
consequence soever it may be under the wing of your kind  
protection, to leave a specimen of legacy to my children  
of the friendship which I have been proud of for the later  
years of my life I send you a law case but of such a nature  
that it ought to be remitted to the court of Aeacus, Minos  
and Rhadamanthus<sup>2</sup> rather than to those of the nether  
world I should like to hear what you think of it &  
whether you will take the ghosts evidence for a thousand  
pounds<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "I hate a drunken rogue"—Sir Toby Belch in *Twelfth Night*, Act V,  
sc 1

<sup>2</sup> The three judges in Hades For 'nether' read "upper"

<sup>3</sup> Sir Samuel replies on 16th April, saying that had he not become deaf  
after having been called to the Bar he would have been in an important  
office in England and never\* come to Scotland, 'where (I can truly say)  
I have pass'd some of the happiest years of my life, and no small portion  
of that happiness is to be ascribed to the Intercourse I have had with you,  
and the kindness and friendship you extended to me when there You  
have made me proud indeed, by putting a public testimonial of your esteem  
and friendship on record, for it is a Record 'ære perennius' Those who  
are now belonging to me and those who shall come after me will feel proud  
from the same cause I think the Jury in Davis's case did right not  
to take the ghost's word, but I am not sure that the acquittal was not owing  
to this *Choice Spirit*, for strong suspicion rests upon the Pannels"—*Walpole  
Collection* When, in July 1776, Shepherd was entered at the Inner Temple  
he became a pupil of Serjeant Charles Runnington (1751-1821), who  
married his sister, Anna Maria, in 1777 Miss Runnington is their  
daughter and Sir Samuel's niece See *DNB*



I am now in a state of retirement but am too late, unless I mend greatly, in taking to it, to expect to take a trip on the continent which I meditated. I am not able to take exercise on foot and scarcely on a pony though I humble myself to be lifted on.

Anne begs her respectful compliments to Lady Shepherd and Miss Runnington in which I have the honour to join. I expect to have the honour of receiving the Chief Commissioner in the beginning of next or end of this month.

I am with the best wishes for the continuance of your health yours with extreme respect and affection meanwhile

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 5 *April* [1831]

TO MAJOR DONALD MACGREGOR,<sup>1</sup> BLAIRMAULD,  
BLAIRGOWRIE

[Extract]

SIR,—I return the curious manuscript. I find that Mr Gregorson of Ardtornish has vindicated the character of Dugald Ciar Mohr by shewing that he died before the contest of Glenfruin. Your manuscript mentioning the fact of [the] death of the students as traditionary in the highlands imputes it to the original Ciar Mohr though certainly by mistake which was acknowledged so soon as it was known. In fact the tradition that some such deed was done by some one of the MacGregors if really true may fairly [be] imputed to that oppression which drives

<sup>1</sup> A footnote by Scott in the Introduction to *Rob Roy* informs us he was "late major of the Thirty third regiment." In the conflict at Glenfruin it had been supposed that the fury of the MacGregors against the Colquhouns "extended itself to a party of students for clerical orders who had imprudently come to see the battle." The MacGregors themselves imputed this cruel action to Ciar Mhor. But, in the footnote just cited, Scott found that a tradition of the Clan MacFarlane "relieves Dugald Ciar Mhor of the guilt of murdering the youths, and lays the blame on a certain Donald or Duncan Lean" with the assistance of a gillie named Charlioch, or Charlie. See Introduction, *op cit* Border Ed., 1 pp xxxiii v.

a wise man [mad]<sup>1</sup> and as for me I was the first literary man of modern days who chose the oppressed Clan as subjects of pity and sympathy. If I had sought to rake up such acts of violence & cruelty as the Criminal records [report] against them there are very cruel stories told by the Lennox families against them. The most savage story of this time is a charge brought against them.<sup>2</sup>

The manifesto of Rob Roy is very curious & unites curiously with a document that I got from Mr Gregorson giving an account of his escape from the Duke of Atholes hands who was desirous to bring him in evidence against the Duke of Argyle.

I hope my friend Mr Donald Gregory<sup>3</sup> will publish his collection of papers & anecdotes concerning the clan Gregor. The MacFarlanes have a tradition that the man who killed the students was afterwards slain (in revenge of a wrong done to a poor woman) by some of their people. I refer you to the last edition of the book which contains all that I think necessary to say on such a subject. You will not find I think in the whole manuscript a word that could lead a stranger to suspect the existence of the two Ciar Mohrs though I have no doubt that at least the person so named could not be Dugald Ciar Mohr. It appears from the letters in Blackwoods Magazine that James the eldest or at least ablest of Robs sons acknowledged Bohaldie for his chief and looked to him for patronage when Death took in hand his relief.

I will be happy when a new edition gives me leave to publish the curious manifesto of Rob Roy which goes a great way to shew that he was really a man of considerable talents fit for the singular part which he played during the beginning of the last century. I do not know if Rob

<sup>1</sup> *Ecclesiastes*, vii 7

<sup>2</sup> See letters to John Gregorson of Ardtornish, 26th January and 28th February 1830, pp 288, 301

<sup>3</sup> See letter to him, 17th July, and note, p 23. For the letters about James MacGregor see *Blackwood's Magazine* for December 1817 and Scott's Introduction to the novel, *Border Ed*, 1 pp xcii iii

Roy left any descendants in the direct line though the Glengyle family still subsist The father of this Duke of Montrose who was blind & consequently impressed with the ideas of his earlier days used to advise his son the present Duke as his Grace has told me of the prudence and necessity of keeping on good humoured terms with them <sup>1</sup> I am Sir with sincere thanks for your politeness your most obedient servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 8 *April* 1831 <sup>2</sup>

[*Moore*]

TO JOHN GIBSON LOCKHART, 25 SUSSEX TERRACE, LONDON

[Extract]

MY DEAR LOCKHART,—The storm of politics being for the time appeased it is time to look at our own matters which are to witt the Stewart papers rather pressing Croker has been craving my attention to them and I have no doubt a good arrangement might be made <sup>3</sup> What would be desiraeable would be a good tight volume of history or personal anecdote as the collection should be found to afford novelty of the unfortunate family steering clear of what is hackd which the whole general history of the 1745 [18] A volume of this written in a touch & go way would fetch a £1000 and two volumes of materials would fetch as much I would willingly do

<sup>1</sup> Here he remarks he has mislaid the address of the gentleman to whom the MS is to be returned and will be obliged to have it in order to do so

<sup>2</sup> "The manuscript mentioned in the inclosed transmitted to Mr Joseph MacGregor Accomptant Edinburgh"—Note appended to letter *The Ednr P O Directory for 1830 31* gives "McGregor, Joseph, esq accountant, 15 George street"

<sup>3</sup> In his reply of the 16th Lockhart writes that in the present difficult times nothing can be done about the Stewart MSS "Indeed Croker himself by his mean suggestions in one of the reports of the original commission seems to have done everything to throw cold water on the affair—entering into calculations as to what Booksellers wd give the Crown in a word furnishing any govt with sufficient pretexts for that shabbines to which all govts are naturally inclined"—*Walpole Collection*

either the one or the other Murray would I suppose like to publish it Cadell would be also pleasur'd to be employ'd I ask'd it about him<sup>1</sup> the other day when he was out here I do not know if we are encumber'd with any Kings Bookseller If our Secretary has been doing any thing to purpose he should have saved us the fag of the examination My health is a good deal better though I am still extremely lame but in the summer time I hope I shall be able to come to town for the thing is of consequence & would [be] a useful and agreeable employment when Count Robert of Paris shall be done which I expect will be this month if [possible] Let me know what you think of my plan which is subject to many alterations & consideration but the subject is interesting the Editors names to say the least very good and though my ideas be extravagant I am loth to be diddled out of it at less than £1000 a piece The actual curiosity of the work depends doubtless on the curiosity of the materials but if the papers have not been garbled there must be a great many of interest & curiosity in a mass so composed

Remember I have one box of the papers with a history of the 1745

When you can take an hour to think of this I will be glad to hear from you I am in possession of five or six Manuscripts copies or large extracts taken under my own eyes

Croker thinks and I am of his opinion that if there was room for a personal narrative of the Chevalier it would answer admirably I should be well pleased to have a part of the Bookselling charge under my own eye But I would make no point of this if other circumstances should render it unnecessary

I might perhaps come up and return with you and as I could shut myself up a few days or weeks would do much business As I can hardly stir twenty yards on foot I would just agree with a cab to carry me between the Regents Park & Saint James

<sup>1</sup> : e ' him about it

Here is John Smith<sup>1</sup> come to appoint me to lay the foundation stone of the two new bridges at Tweed and Ettrick which is to have the effect of carrying our road from the south side of the river to the north a great improvement on Conundrum castle

Only think of John Taylor of Norwich in a book on German poetry having taken the freedom to say that the play of Goe[t]z von Berliching[en] was translated by one Mr William Scott of Edinburgh Advocate<sup>2</sup> who afterwards assumed the name of Walter as more poetical and romantick & had been distinguish[d] by that name in European literary history Only think of this Master B[r]ooke Me a good old Fidalgo of a gentlemans stock to be accused of changing my name by a Cucumber devouring tailor Damn him if he we[re] eighteen tailors & that is two men I am with kindest [MS cut]

[PM 14 April 1831]

[Nat Lib Scot]

<sup>1</sup> John Smith of Darnick, the builder of Abbotsford See *Journal*, 11th April 1831

<sup>2</sup> Some copies of Scott's early translating did, as a fact, bear the name "William Scott" To this fact Taylor refers in an apology of 9th May to a letter from Scott, for which see p. 16 "If you had seen the title page of Goetz von Berlichingen, printed at London in 1799 for Bell 148 Oxford Road, you would not be surprized at my blunder It states the play to have been translated from the German by William Scott Esq, Advocate, of Edinburgh That there should be two W. Scotts, both advocates, both of Edinburgh, and both skilled in German at a time when the study of that language was uncommon, appeared to me so improbable, that I inferred the historic or baptismal name of this individual to be William, and his romantic or Arcadian name to be Walter Your letter has disabused me

It remains to enquire in what manner you wish me to reestablish the fact Sorry to have occasioned you a moment of displeasure"—*Walpole Collection* On 12th May 1834 Stephen Oliver, a pseudonym of William Andrew Chatto (1779-1864), writes to William Blackwood that a year ago he made a translation of *Goetz* "When I made my own translation I had not seen Sir Walter's, which is extremely scarce, but I have since seen a copy, which on the title page is said to be by William Scott Esq, Advocate, Edinburgh A perusal of this version has not made me think worse of my own, and has enabled me, I think, to perceive the reason why it was never republished"—Letter from the archives of Messrs Blackwood & Sons, Ltd Scott writes 'John Taylor' instead of William Taylor, for whom see Vol. I, p. 59 and note Taylor's book is *Historic Survey of German Poetry, etc*, 3 vols (1828-30)

TO ROBERT CADELL

[Extract]

DEAR SIR,—I had my own private fears that the negotiation with Turner would have its difficulties I have written to him with all civility offering him all sort of hospitality & means of transportation<sup>1</sup> It is folly to attempt doing a thing of such consequence without doing his utmost and taking the personal trouble of making the drawing on the spot I would rather far have John Thomson doing his best than Turner slurring it<sup>2</sup> It is right to humbug the publick if you can but after all they will not be humbugd beyond a certain extent I fear you must come into Turners terms however extravagant as they are now to be

Yours in great [haste] to save Blucher The proof sheet is to be ready for [the] Chevy Chase I am truly glad your sister in law is better I am yours truly

W SCOTT

9 o'clock 15 April 1831

[Stevenson]

<sup>1</sup> Turner replies on the 20th, acknowledging the compliment of an invitation to Abbotsford and outlining the route he proposes to take—*Walpole Collection* The omitted portion of Scott's letter is about finishing *Count Robert* He insists upon retaining Turner Going into great detail about Turner's illustrations, Cadell writes on 1st August One thing I rebel against—even against you—we will have no Aisle at Dryburgh No, No, No Many years I trust will come before that is engraved We will have the house of the Living Bard I protest against the Mausoleum Dryburgh Abbey we may have—but we will have no admission of the Mortality of the Author of the Lay ' Agam, on 19th September "I am sorry that Mr Turner should have annoyed you all so much—it was most absurd to be in such a pother"—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> Cf letter (1879) from Ruskin to Dr John Brown "Scott, who was exactly like Turner, inspired quite rightly only when quite passive I've just been reading the *Pirate* again THERE is a Farrago of ugly stuff for you at the end indeed, very difficult to analyse,—like Turner's bad work"—*Letters of Dr John Brown*, ed by his Son and D W Forrest, D D (1907), p 308

To JOHN G LOCKHART,<sup>1</sup> 24 SUSSEX PLACE, LONDON

MY DEAR LOCKHART,—I use Annes hand to write a few lines to you & Sophia The last friday, Saturday, and Sunday, from some unavoidable concurrence of guests I made rather too great an exertion, though in the way of speech I was not guilty of the slightest excess of any kind On Sunday I went to bed under what seemed a severe cold, on Monday I had lost my voice almost totally and was feverish I was bled and blistered and suffered enough

This day I am greatly better, and my speech much restored and in fact I wait for Dr Clarksons license to get up I got your letter which I shall answer when I rise Meanwhile of course an *immediate* journey to London is out of the question, and we shall have time to talk about the Stuart papers Tell Sophia she must make up her mind to see me a great deal weaker than [*illegible*] in point of bodily exertion but as far as I am conscious no alteration in the state of my mind <sup>2</sup> The times are bad, may God mend them Given from our bedside where Anne and Miss Jane Erskine are playing the Doctresses Love to Sophia & the children and believe me in Annes hand Yours affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

[20 April 1831]

20th April 10 o clock

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> All this letter is written in Anne Scott's hand.

<sup>2</sup> Several letters, in the summer of this year, preserved in the Abbotsford Collection, *Nat Lib Scot*, indicate the trend of Scott's illness In a long, pathetic letter of 29th May, enclosed in one from Scott to Charles at Naples, Walter says "You will see his handwriting is very much altered and indeed much of it illegible His memory is unimpaired but I believe that his compositions are not equal to what they were, & how is it possible they should be—in short the last Vol of the new novel (I understand) is very inferior and it has been wholly dictated during the intervals of his illness' On 14th July Lockhart writes to Sophia "Your accounts of yr father are truly comforting & the weather is so charming that I do hope he will persist in frisking about to the great invigoration of body & mind To Allan Cunningham he writes on the 21st that he has just returned from Lanark shire, "whither I had gone wt Sir W Scott to see Douglas Castle & visit my brother for a day or two—the 'extensive highland tour of the Newspapers'

2 o clock

MY DEAR LOCKHART,—Abercrombie has been here I sent for him yesterday There is NO DANGER NOW Papas speech is quite come round again at least very much so

Mr Cadell came also this morning with Dr A and both return in a few hours I trust this attack is over but have my own fears the next will prove fatal I am much fatigued & fear you wont be able to read this Affectly yrs

A SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO ROBERT CADELL

[Extract]

ABBOTSFORD

*Friday night [22nd and 23rd April 1831]*

MY DEAR CADELL,—I inclose a letter received today from Mr Turner who seems in excellent humour for our job On looking at your list of subjects it divides naturally into three classes About fifteen are within reach of this place and I could easily transport to the scenes by Poney & Dog Cart I should think a week would finish this in summer weather A 2d list lie just in his way on the English road hither such as Northam, Barnard Castle, Carlisle Castle, etc

A third class of these is the highland scenes Some of them would lead him too far, put him to inconvenience and delay, time perhaps too long, but for them we will either get copies, or find substitutes so we will have the whole capable of being fitted up within the time you propose I am quite pleased to see he is taking kindly to his oars and have no doubt the scheme is in good progress, and he & you will boat us over in safety Yours very sincerely

WALTER SCOTT

[*written by Anne Scott*]

[*Stevenson*]



TO ROBERT CADELL

DEAR SIR,—I am pretty well but we will say no more about health for every one badgers me about it J B wishes to engage himself & I in what he calls a pledge to a temperate Society, that is to proclaim ourselves sots & intemperate fools to the whole world <sup>1</sup> He be damned—& so much for that

I will keep my diet substituting honest porridge instead of a pack of vegetable hash & pudding which as the old song says—make all my stomach & bowels sick

For working Dr Abercrombie knows better than most people that a man can no more say to his mind “dont think” than Molly can say to her Kettle “dont boil” when she finds it on a brisk fire

So we will hope all will be guided for the best & mind our business whilst it is called today I have little doubt Count Robert may appear next week, previous to which I shall have a lot of books to send in to Crawford the binder You can make Borthwick copy the list I hope also to discharge myself of the Constantinopolitan History

Mrs Cadell is I trust continuing well & also your brother-in-law I hope to send Lord Hopeton’s inscription by next parcel but Ballantyne must set it up being indispensable at all those niceties of spaces, blocks, divisions & the style-lapidary <sup>2</sup> Yours truly W LAIDLAW

begging you not to forget Charles for WALTER [SCOTT]

[25<sup>th</sup> or 26<sup>th</sup> April 1831]

[Stevenson]

<sup>1</sup> James has written on 23rd April “It gives me great delight to hear that you are recovering fast from your late indisposition I suspect it would do both yourself and your printer some good, were both to pin their pledged word to some Abstinence Society” Cadell has also written on the 25th, urging rest and care, to which this letter is an answer James writes on the 28th to explain that he had not meant to recommend total abstinence — *Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> The Earl of Hopetoun had died in 1823 See Vol VIII, p 120 and note The Walpole Collection contains letters (January to June 1831)

TO SUSAN FERRIER

ABBOTSFORD *Wednesday evening* [11th May 1831]

DEAR MISS FERRIER,—If I had a spark of gratitude in me I ought to have written you well-nigh a month ago to thank you in no common fashion for ‘Destiny,’<sup>1</sup> which by the few and at the same time the probability of its incidents your writings are those of the first person of genius who has disarmed the little pedantry of the Court of Cupid, and of gods and men, and allowed youths and maidens to propose other alliances than those an early choice had pointed out to them. I have not time to tell you all the consequences of my revolutionary doctrine. All these we will talk over when you come here, which I am rejoiced to hear is likely to be on Saturday next, when Mr Cadell will be happy to be your *beau* in the Blucher, and we will take care are met with at the toll. Pray do not make this a flattering dream. You are of the initiated, so will not be *de trop* with Cadell. I am always, with the greatest respect and regard, your faithful and affectionate servant,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Doyle’s Memoir of Susan Ferrier*]

from Cadell, Thomas Campbell the sculptor, James Hope, Junr, and Gibson Craig on the preparations for the monument. Other letters on the subject are in *MS 146, Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>1</sup> In an undated letter to Susan Ferrier Anne writes “Papa was so delighted with ‘Destiny,’—*really and truly so*. I need not say what I thought of it! My dear Miss Ferrier, I wish so much papa would review it in the ‘Quarterly,’ or Lockhart. Do tell me if you would *like* it to be done, for, though I am an author’s daughter, I don’t know much about *these things*.” In other letters up to 10th May she expresses hopes for Susan Ferrier’s intended visit to Abbotsford.—J. A. DOYLE, *Memoir of Susan Ferrier* (1898), pp. 248, 51. On 1st May Anne writes to Miss Millar “Dr A says Papa’s constitution is so excellent that he may live twenty years, if he will only take care of himself. After *mature deliberation* I rejected my little —, but he has got over it, and is going to be married, which I am glad of, to a lady with a great deal of money which I found *afterwards* would be *very* necessary, so I am sure it will all be for the best. I need *not say* don’t mention this.”—*Letters by Scott’s Family to their Old Governess* (1905), pp. 134, 5. See *Journal*, 12th, 16th, and 17th May 1831.

## TO WILLIAM TAYLOR OF NORWICH

ABBOTSFORD (POST TOWN, MELROSE)

*Sunday, 23rd April [15th May], 1832*<sup>1</sup>

SIR,—I have been rendered unable by a severe indisposition, otherwise I would have previously solicited your attention to an inaccurate statement in your second [third] volume upon German poetry, with which you have obliged the British public “It was translated into English,” you say, “in 1799 at Edinburgh, by William Scott, Advocate, no doubt the same person who, under the poetical but assumed name of Walter, has since become the most extensively popular of the British writers”<sup>2</sup>

I am sensible, Sir, that in other parts of the United Kingdom the eulogy in this passage may make amends for its error, but to a native of Scotland there are few things accounted more dishonourable than abandoning his own name, unless it be adopting that of another person. With the bard in the Critic I can safely say,

“My name’s Tom Jenkins, alias have I none”

My father’s name was Walter, his grandfather’s name was the same, and I could go back into a much longer detail of persons of respectable descent, known both in history and record, although pretending to no peculiar distinction of birth beyond that of gentleman. How you have been led into the mistake I cannot guess. Goetz,

<sup>1</sup> This letter appears in Napier’s *Homes and Haunts of Sir Walter Scott* (Glasgow, 1897), where the correct date is given. The date here taken from the Memoir of Taylor is obviously wrong as on 23rd April 1832 Scott was returning home from Naples, which he had left on the 16th April. As Taylor’s letter, to which Scott here replies, is dated 9th May and if “Sunday” be correct, this letter may have been written on 15th May, the first Sunday thereafter. See letter to Lockhart, 14th April, and note 2, p. 10.

<sup>2</sup> This passage occurs in Vol. III, p. 243, of Taylor’s *Historic Survey of German Poetry*. The lines from Taylor’s translation of “Ellenore,” quoted later in the letter by Scott, appear in stanzas xxxix, xlviii, and liv (*op. cit.*, II, pp. 46–49), where they are thus printed:

“Tramp, tramp, across the land they speede,  
Splash, splash, across the see.”

whom you call Godfred,<sup>1</sup> was a character nearly resembling the more ancient of this lineage, they would have meddled with no man's name, though his property might have been in some danger had it fed near these pastures and called an Englishman its master. The lineal representative of the family is Hugh Scott, Esq., of Harden, with whom I have been always in the closest intimacy. I do not know in what shape the translation was given to the public. The late Mat Lewis, commonly called Monk Lewis, managed the publication with John Bell, the bookseller. Both persons corresponded with me under my well-known name of Walter Scott, nor had they any right or apology for changing it into William, nor did I ever see a copy of the book in which I was so transmuted.

I must not forget, Sir, that I am addressing a person to whom I owe a literary favour of some consequence. I think it is from you, and by your obliging permission, that I borrowed, with my acknowledgment, the lines in your translation of Lenore,

Tramp, tramp along the land,  
Splash, splash across the sea,

which a friend<sup>2</sup> had caught up from a spirited version, recited at Edinburgh, at the celebrated Dugald Stewart's, by Mrs Letitia Barbauld. Assure yourself, Sir, my recollection of the obligation is infinitely stronger than that of the mistake, and if you have preserved, which I have little reason to expect, the letters I wrote at so early a period, you will find that they are subscribed by my baptismal name of, Sir, Your most humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

P S This letter is written by the hand of a friend

[*Robberd's Life of Taylor of Norwich*]

<sup>1</sup> In the letter cited above Taylor explains that Goetz is the German familiar abbreviation for Godfried, as Hal for Henry — *Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> The friend was Henry Cranstoun, afterwards Lord Corehouse. See Vol I, pp 59 and note, 60, Vol V, pp 215 16 note

TO THE LORD[D] CHIEF COMMISSIONER [WILLIAM ADAM]

BLAIR ADAM

[Extract]

MY DEAR LORD,—I have rarely [been] more grieved and mortified than by receiving your Lordships letter acquainting me with your Lordships indifferent health which forms too good an apology for not having the honor of seeing you here while most unhappily I am recov[er]ing so slowly and imperfectly from an attack which I had in spring that I have very little prospect of Blair Adam this year <sup>1</sup> To speak on blyther matters some young ladies daughters of a friendly antiquarian that died lately sent me a print of a key with some documents stating to have been found in the Loch & represented of course as *the* Key of the castle At any rate it is of a very antique and beautiful shape and would hang beautifully being of a very graceful form and not like a key of modern days It is hanging before me and will serve as well as the image of Maida to light up the recollection of happy days which though Fortun[e] has g[iv]en the Club an unco devel[ing] <sup>2</sup> may in some respects

<sup>1</sup> Here he repeats details of his condition and diet, etc On 15th May Adam gives an account of his poor health He has been moved into "the room where Landseers picture hangs, and my sofa is so placed that I can admire Maida's grave demeanour" On the 23rd he says that Willie Clerk has been staying with him "I told him of your plan of keeping the Club alive till you and I, the two invalids, should be able to join them in another year The Club began by you Sir Adam [Ferguson] & Clerk coming here with me in 1817"—*Walpole Collection* The "friendly antiquarian" is William Hamper, whose suicide has been announced by one Thomas Osler in a letter from Birmingham on 5th May—*Walpole Collection* To Thomas Sharp on 16th May Scott acknowledges receiving "the curious and valuable relique stated to be the Key of Loch Leven Castle I heard with great regret the death of my friend Mr Hamper whose kind communications I hoped to enjoy for a considerable time Though I never had the pleasure to meet Mr Hamper I cannot but as a father myself be deeply affected by the separation of such a man from his family I very little thought that the notes to Kenilworth were the last favour I should receive at his hand —*Owen D Young Collection* See letters to Hamper, 9th February 1830, and to Adam, 30th June 1831

<sup>2</sup> See Burns, "Tam Samson's Elegy," verse 111—'an unco devel,' &c an unusually severe blow

return to us yet I must tell your Lordship about Maida that a friend pickd up at Mun[1]ch a tin snuffbox such as is sold for a franc a piece bearing the effigy of poor Mai obviously taken from your beautiful picture but with a different background and two or three words of a motto signifying in german the favourite dog of Walter Scott Poor Maida was sitting bobbishly the man said though he knew but little about the subject It was however *fame* both to Landseer and me as Goldsmith said when he found a volume of his writing in a remote ale-house <sup>1</sup>

I feel something sad when I think it will be the first day for many years that I shall be absent from our happy party but the total want of strength tells me it cannot be and that my hope must be that we shall meet in better times I hope however you[r] Lordship will summon enough of those who with the will retain the power of attending you and that upon the occasion I will not [be] entirely forgotten by those by whom I would most wish to be remembered I beg my kind compliments to Miss Adam to the Charlton<sup>2</sup> family and to all who are dear to you and contribute so much to render an invalids couch supportable With a grateful sense of obligation I remain always your Lordships most truly

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 15 May [1831]

The Lockharts and anne offer their best respects

[*Blair-Adam*]

<sup>1</sup> Scott *may* be thinking of the occasion when, in September 1777, on their way to Derby, Dr Johnson and Boswell visited Kedleston, Lord Scarsdale's seat, where they found in his lordship's dressing room a copy of Johnson's small dictionary as well as Goldsmith's *Animated Nature*, on seeing which Johnson said "Here's our friend!" The poor doctor would have been happy to hear of this —Croker, *Boswell's Johnson* (1831), IV, pp 8 10 But perhaps Scott had read Hazlitt's "My First Acquaintance with Poets" (*The Liberal*, 1823), where Hazlitt tells how, at an inn, "we found a little worn out copy of the *Seasons*, lying in a window-seat, on which Coleridge exclaimed, *That is true fame!*"

<sup>2</sup> Charleton, the seat of Mr Anstruther Thomson, in the east of Fife Thomson was a member of the Blair Adam Club

TO MRS EATON,<sup>1</sup> &C, &C, KELTON HALL, NEAR STAMFORD

[Extract]

DEAR MRS EATON,—I had no occasion for your kind letter to put me in remembrance of my early & kind recollections of your family which began with your excellent & kind old grandmother<sup>2</sup> who placed her husbands library at my disposal when I was a boy at Kelso with a kindness which partook of real charity And so though the after circumstances of life have rendered our meetings rare I assure you that I fully deserve [y]our over estimation for old kindness & its recollections As for my present state I believe Nature is calling for her tribute for after having been spared the common lot of humanity for many a long day I cannot be surprized if I pay for the easy passage which I have had through life & I have to be greatly thankful that though weaker greatly than I have hitherto been I can enjoy life without pain or much illness and so I suppose I must hold myself contented for the days remaining to me which I neither expect nor anxiously wish to be many, though I leave that matter contentedly to Gods pleasure

My patronizing bookseller Mr Cadell of Edinburgh left this some time since on a route to London through the west of England and will soon be in London though I am not just certain of the time If the book is intrusted to him by my friend Mr Murray I will receive it safe & shall be

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol IV, p 389 and note 2, and letter to her, 5th April 1826, Vol IX, p 497 On 4th June Mrs Eaton writes to ask if a copy of her novel *At Home and Abroad* has reached Scott through John Murray It 'was composed nearly twenty years ago on the banks of the Tweed This is *At Home and Abroad, or, Memoirs of Emily de Cardonnell*, [Anon], 3 vols (1831) "I consider myself fortunate in having been born in the same age with you, and that I have known you, however slight and transient the acquaintance, I shall always think one of the proudest events of my life You may not know who it is that is writing to you—and that I was Charlotte Waldie of Hendersyde My married name you may easily have forgotten '—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> "The good Lady Waldie of Hendersyde," as here interpolated in a copy (*MS 855, Nat Lib Scot*) made, presumably, by Mrs Eaton

most happy so to receive any mark of your remembrance

Dear Mrs Eaton your thankful humbl[e] Servant

8 June 1831 ABBOTSFORD

WALTER SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO ROBERT CADELL

[Extract] •

DEAR SIR,— If you see Treuttel & Wurz or Mr Cochrane I could give them without trouble a review of *Han d'Islande* a curious work by Victor Hugues, French dramatist <sup>1</sup> I long promised something of the kind But perhaps it would not now be acceptable The last contribution of the kind was for Mr Gillies but this must be for myself

I have no more to say except that we will expect to see you as you come down I am trying all I can to get out Walter Terry for India & have hope of success Yours very truly

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 12 June 1831

The first & second volume of the *Grandfathers tales* will be ready to go to press when you like I want also to go to the *reliquiae* but I will be obliged to get some [?] exact information who or what Mr Withers is who has most impudently attackd me <sup>2</sup> a planter or nursery man I

<sup>1</sup> On the 21st J. G. Cochrane (for whom see note to letter to him, 6th February 1829, Vol XI, p. 32) says Cadell has transmitted to him Scott's proposal of a review, but an account of "all Hugo's poems and romances had appeared in *The Foreign Quarterly Review* as long ago as April 1829

Since that time, we have given (in No. XII) an account of his play *Hernani*, which has been brought out upon the English stage, our next number (XV) will contain an article on a new romance of Hugo, '*Notre Dame de Paris*, coupled with two rather clever volumes of French middle age stories, which a young romancer has thought fit to father upon you, under the title of '*Soirees de Walter Scott a Paris*' — *Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> In a letter of 4th November 1829, from Holt, Norfolk, W[illiam] Withers explains that though he has opposed Scott's opinions on planting with warmth he has not intended any personal offence, but to express "a very decided opinion in favor of my system of planting in preference to



suppose I know something about him from Mr Coke of Norfolk

[Stevenson]

TO THE LORD CHIEF COMMISSIONER [WILLIAM ADAM],  
BLAIR ADAM

MY DEAR LORD,—I duly received your kind remembrance and hav[e] the pleasure to think that the Blair Adam Club is assembled in force and the pleasure to know that though absent from you in body I shall be remembered by those whose memory I should least like to lose ground in I have sent the Key said to have been once turn'd on the lovely Queen Mary when she was prisoner in Lochleven Castle It is of a singular shape & really looks the thing When I can lay my hands on the documents which vouch its authenticity I will send exact copies so that you will be in possession of the whole evidence Mr Hamper a good antiquary left the key to me Kindes[t] wishes & fraternal love attend all at Blair Adam both young & old The inscription is very classical in form & size very like [one] found in this neighbourhood lately dedicated by the tribune Domitian to the God Sylvanus found near the mouth of the Leader <sup>1</sup>

that recommended by you"—*Walpole Collection* See *A Letter to Sir Henry Stewart, Bart on the Improvement in the Quality of Timber, etc* By W Withers (1829) "Mr Coke of Norfolk" is Thomas William Coke (1754-1842), of Holkham, Norfolk, the well known agriculturist, created Earl of Leicester in 1837 See A M W Stirling, *Coke of Norfolk and his Friends* (1908) "May 23 (1828)—I breakfasted with Chantrey, and met the celebrated Coke of Norfolk Withers, he said, was never employed save upon one or two small jobs of about twenty acres on which every expense was bestowed with a view to early growth So much for Withers I shall have a rod in pickle for him if worth while"—*Journal* Probably 'the reliquiae' is *Reliquiae Trotcosenses* See Vol XI, p 292, note 3

<sup>1</sup> Scott refers to a Roman altar, discovered on 15th January 1830 near the Red Abbeystead, at that time in the possession of Thomas Tod of Drygrange See *Letters on Demonology* (1831), footnote, pp 115-16, *Proceedings of the Society of Antiquaries of Scotland*, vol 1 (1855) pp 29-31, where the altar is reproduced as plate 1 of the volume, and James Curle, *A Roman Frontier Post and its People, etc* (1911), p 141, where it is stated that the altar "is now at Ross Priory, Dumbartonshire, in the possession of Sir Alexander Leith Buchanan, Bart"

All manner of sport attend you and may your sports be as pleasing as for the dozen years they have never faild to prove

I am pretty well except now and then a fit of dizziness or head ache which I suspect I must look for through future lif[e] as long as the machine shall continue to move at all Tho I should be very ungrateful did I not report myself on the whole much better I send this by Blucher Coach trusting that the Guard will at Edinburgh put it in the way of reaching Blair Adam safely Here is a glorious day which presses upon me the recollection of friends and scenery in your vicinity and makes me wish for Prince Ho[u]sse[1]ns tapestry or something of the kind that would beat steam [*illegible*] Me1 sis memor Love & mirth to the whole fireside young or old from Your Lordships much obliged & most faithful

WALTER SCOTT

30 June 1831 ABBOTSFORD

[*Blair-Adam*]

TO DONALD GREGORY,<sup>1</sup> 10 AINSLIE PLACE, EDINBURGH

[Copy]

MY DEAR SIR,—Though I have not had time to do the Macgregors justice, yet I am sure I have dealt to them a larger measure of that than they have been accustomed to receive at the hands of persons with whom they were most nearly connected

<sup>1</sup> *The Edinr P O Directory for 1831 32* has 'Gregory, Donald, sec to the Society of Antiquaries, 10 Ainslie place' Gregory (*d* 1836) was also secretary to the Iona Club, and a member of the Glasgow Ossianic Society and the Royal Society of the Antiquaries of the North at Copenhagen He published *History of the Western Highlands and Isles of Scotland, from A D 1493 to A D 1625, etc* (1836) On 30th June Gregory says he sends through Skene a MS copy of his *Essay on the Earlier History of the Clan Gregor*, now greatly enlarged and published in the Society of Antiquaries *Transactions* As he means to continue his 'Historical Notices of the Clan,' he would be obliged if Scott could direct him to any sources he may have overlooked —*Walpole Collection*

Since I read Pennant, I have been shockd at the anathema he has [pronounced] on this unhappy tribe<sup>1</sup>, and I have tried to do my best to laugh the world, the Southern world at least, out of these absurd prejudices I am much pleased with what you have recovered and hope you will go on and get another lot of Macgregoriana Every [thing] allied with Gaelic Antiquities has been unfortunate, for the friends wish it should be defended with a zeal beyond truth, and enemies, where they detect a falsehood or exaggeration think therefore that every thing is false

Now you have put the sickle of a candid and cool tempered man into this harvest I hope you will go on Try the question of Ossian never temperately dealt with, not even by Laing, acute enough but rather liable to over[r]ate himself What is become of a Mass of Gaelic papers said to have been collected by the Highland Society? Would it not be as well sometimes to talk of Wisdom as to confine their conversation entirely to Sturks and bullocks?<sup>2</sup> Where there was a race of hereditary Poets, there must have been Men of merit I wish you would buckle to the task The border Minstrels made a man of me the highlanders, a much more ample subject, may make a hero of you Every body would give you every assistance

I am ending my career when you are beginning yours, but, if I could be of any use, Heigh Donald Dougals ready [Heigh]

<sup>1</sup> In describing Loch Lomond, Pennant mentions that "beneath *Craig Roston* was the principal seat of the *McGregors*, a murderous clan, infamous for excesses of all kinds their very name suppressed by act of council, so that the remnant, now dispersed like *Jews*, dare not even sign it to any deed Their posterity are still said to be distinguished among the clans in which they have incorporated themselves, not only by the redness of their hair, but by their retaining the mischievous disposition of their ancestors"—THOMAS PENNANT, *A Tour in Scotland 1769*, fifth edition (1790), 1 pp 244 45

<sup>2</sup> "How can he get Wisdom that holdeth the plough and that glorieth in the goad, that driveth oxen, and is occupied in their labours, and whose talk is of bullocks"—*Ecclesiasthus*, chap xxxviii, v 25

With all this nonsense I am really delighted with your book, as well as [your] much obliged & indebted humble  
Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 17 July 1831

[A M Gregorson]

TO ROBERT CHAMBERS,<sup>1</sup> BOOKSELLER, EDINBURGH

DEAR MR CHAMBERS,—I received your letter through Mr Caddell It is impossible for a gentleman to say no to a request which flatters him more than he deserves But even although it is said in the Newspapers I actually am far from well and instead of being exercizing on a brother novelist Chateau-Briant my influence to decide him to raise an insurrection in france<sup>2</sup> which is the very probable employment allotted to me by some of the papers I am keeping my head as cool as I can and speaking with

<sup>1</sup> This letter is given in abridged versions in George Allan's *Life of Scott* (1834), p 497, and in *Memoir of Robert Chambers* (second ed 1872), pp 198-99 We suspect "Miss Eccles is one of the three daughters, Elizabeth, Grace, or Mary, of Isaac Ambrose Eccles (d 1809), the Shakespearean scholar, of Cronroe, Co Wicklow See *D N B* Again, she may be Hester, elder daughter of John Dickson Eccles, of Ecclesville, Fintona, Co Tyrone See also *Burke's Landed Gentry*, 4th ed (1868), p 414 In a letter, presumably written near the end of July or on 1st August, addressed to Cadell, Chambers says that "Miss Eccles, an Irish lady of fortune," who had come to Scotland the previous year to see Scott without success, has now travelled again from Ireland to get a peep at him, to whom "she is as completely devoted in heart-sick love as ever was Heloise devoted to the image of Abelard, etc" Then, on 29th July Cadell writes to Scott "The lady must be the same I think who called on me when you were in Clydesdale I curvetted & made all sorts of murgeons to shove her off you I disclaim all communion with her—only if she is to make her way to Abbotsford I wish it may be when I am there as the meeting must be amusing—she is neither young nor handsome" —*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> G P R James writes to Lockhart in 1831 from Maxpoffle, sending a transcript of a newspaper paragraph with this comment "The greater the lie, the more easily, generally, and pertinaciously will the French believe it" It is from "the *Edinburgh Evening Post*, June 23—page 237 'The Constitutionnel has received a private letter from Edinburgh, stating that Sir Walter Scott had undertaken to endeavour to induce M de Chateaubriand to favour the exiled family's project of invasion, and that on his indignant refusal, the Duchess de Berri had been recalled to Holyrood'" —*Walpole Collection*

some difficulty But I am unwilling to make a piece of work about nothing & instead of doing so I ought rather to receive the lady as civilly as I can I am much out riding or rather crawling about my plantations in the morning when the weather will permit but a card from Miss Eccles from Melrose will find me at home & happy to see her although the effect is like to be [a] disappointment to the Lady I am your faithful humble servant

I have owed you a letter longer than I intended but I write with pain & general[ly] use the hand of a friend I sign with my initials as enough to represent the poor half of me that is left but I am still much your[s]

ABBOTSFORD [P M 2 Augt 1831]

W S

[C E S Chambers]

TO MRS JOHN BALLANTYNE,<sup>1</sup> CARE OF JAMES BALLANTYNE,  
DUNBLANE

DEAR MRS BALLANTYNE,—I have your letter and am favoured also with an unnecessary but well meant favour

<sup>1</sup> This letter has been readdressed to the Post Office, St Andrews, and on the back of it Mrs John Ballantyne has written the following "After my death, I give and bequeath this literary curiosity to A Malloch Esqr of the Union Bank, Berwick It was addressed to me only a few months before Sir Walter's death, when his great mind had begun to give way — he had forgotten that the person 'calling himself McCrone' was a gentleman with whom he had held a long correspondence on the Train business, and Crown agent for the Isle of Man The 'distresses' he alludes to were occasioned by my husband's extravagance, who left me in almost abject poverty Sir Walter *after* his own misfortunes allowed me a small sum annually, besides which he remitted me a handsome sum in ready money Since Sir Walter's death it has pleased Providence to place me above want, for which I bless his name HERMIONE BALLANTYNE"—Letter in the possession of the late Mr James Glen See letter to James Ballantyne, 21st October 1830, and note, Vol XI, pp 398 9 Before her marriage to John Ballantyne she was Hermione Parker, daughter of George Parker, merchant, London Some time after John's death she became Mrs Glover See Vol VI, p 484 and note 1 In her "Rambling Reminiscences" of Scott (*Chambers's Edinburgh Journal*, 28th October 1843, p 325) Mrs Ballantyne says "I received a letter from him shortly before his lamented death, which, if it should be in existence fifty or a hundred years hence, will be a literary curiosity—some of the words, one in particular, are written *over* the line

from a person calling himself MacCrone who writes about your late distresses The gentleman must excuse my writing at present having much trouble in writing

Some of poor John's friends are about to contribute to relieve any immediate embarrassment to which before receiving yours I had already promised my willing assistance This however can be but temporary I would willingly hear of something more permanent But though I am in hopes of a return to good fortune it is at present uncertain what my own income may be & uncertain therefore what I can spare to assist others Meantime be assured you are not forgotten & I will write at more length when I can write with more ease I am truly sorry for the subject of this correspondence Your most obedient Servant

WALTER SCOTT

I have spoken with Mr Caddell on this business & James B and Mr Cowan have also engaged efficiently in it

8 August 1831 ABBOTSFORD

[Glen]

TO CHARLES SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 8th Aug 1831

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I hope you have a letter which Mr Cadell has written to you assuring you of your £200 per annum at the four regular terms of Whitsunday about

and in concluding, he tells me (which unfortunately never came to pass) 'that when he can write more at ease, he will write more at leisure' " The Nat Lib Scot (MS 922) possesses some doggerel verses written to Scott and signed "Hermione" They are on a sheet addressed to Scott at Abbotsford, but a stamp records "missent to Exeter," another stamp has "Dunblane," and the postmark is "30 July 1831" Four of the lines run thus

"Fear not—thy loan shall be secure—  
(High Heaven be thy reward!)  
For he who giveth to the poor,  
But—lendeth to the Lord!"

20th May Lambmas 20 August and Martinmas November and Christmas in four equal portions I have impressed cash in his hands for this purpose & you may count on his regular[1]ty being a thorough man of business Our matters look much more flourishing than they did and upon making up books sales and all the rest of it we find we have kept our ground when the rest of the bookmaking world are going to the Devil <sup>1</sup> We are living and thriving in so much that if my health does not get worse I shall next year have near wrought through all my troubles and once more caper in my own free hold On[e] of the most agreeable uses I can make of the ease & amusement which this will afford me will [be] to pay Italy & especially Naples a visit for the dead months of winter The idea of your being my guide through these classical regions is a very pleasant prospect so you must get well acquainted [with them] Cadell undertakes for expences suppose £1000 or £1500 on condition of my keeping a journal that may be visible one day so if I can run it hard I know what to do Walter and his Wife will probabl[y] see us to Naples & then return Lockhart and Anne<sup>2</sup> reckon on coming out to us in the spring This gives a gay prospect for beginning the year and I look to no mid impediment if my health continue tolerable Anne comes with me so Abbotsford will stand empty till spring 1832 be well past I shou[ld] like to see some thing <sup>3</sup> of Sicily but when I think of Vesuvius and Ætna it is too late a week in life for visiting the Cyclops her reverence [?] Here is something to speak about and how you will bear you[r] old padre pick a back like father Anchises Indeed I will look to you for information of what routes are to be seen where sights lie &c This prospect is enough for one letter Let me know if you have impeticoed the

<sup>1</sup> On 2nd July James Ballantyne had reported "I learn from Mr Cadell, that bad as business is in London—and it was perhaps never so bad—there is no falling off in the sale of the *Magnum*"—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> He means Sophia

<sup>3</sup> "Think" actually written

gratilities last sent of £50 to be continued quarterly &  
I remain Dear Charles your affectionate father

WALTER SCOTT

What letters should I bring out with me

[*Law*]

TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE, PRINCE'S STREET,  
EDINBURGH

ABBOTSFORD, *September, 1831*

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I pray you to honour me with your acceptance of the last number of Mr Lodge's *Illustrious Persons*<sup>1</sup> My best thanks to you for the genealogy, which completes a curious subject I am just setting off for the Mediterranean, a singular instance of a change of luck, for I have no sooner put my damaged fortune into as good a condition as I could desire, than my health, which till now has been excellent, has failed so utterly in point of strength, that while it will not allow me to amuse myself by travelling, neither will it permit me to stay at home

I should like to have shaken hands with you, as there are few I regret so much to part with<sup>2</sup> But it may not be I will keep my eyes dry if possible, and therefore content myself with bidding you a long (perhaps an eternal) farewell But I may find my way home again, improved

<sup>1</sup> 'He [Scott] had, apparently, subscribed for Lodge's splendid book of *British Portraits*, and then, receiving a copy *ex dono auctoris*, sent his own numbers, as they arrived, to this gentleman Sir Walter's letter to Mr Lodge's publisher is now prefixed to that magnificent book, the circulation of which has been, to the honour of the public, so great, that I need not introduce the beautiful eulogium here —*Lockhart*, chap lxxx See letter to the publisher, Joseph Harding, 25th March 1828, Vol X, p 406 and note

Thanking him for letters to include in the *Life*, Lockhart writes to Sharpe on 21st January 1837 "The affectionate farewell of Sept 1831 is of course in good time & I am really glad to have so pretty a proof of his regard for you to offer so near the close of his history —Letter in the possession of Mr James Curle



as a Dutch skipper from a whale fishing I am very happy  
that I am like to see Malta Always yours, well or ill—

[Lockhart]

WALTER SCOTT

TO J G LOCKHART, CHIEFSWOOD

[September 1831]

DEAR DON OR DOCTOR GIOVANNI,—Can you really be  
thinking of taking Wa-Wa by the coach, and I think you  
said outside? Think of Johnny and be careful of this  
little man<sup>1</sup> Are you *par hazard* something in the state of  
the poor Capitaine des Dragons that comes in singing,—

“Comment? Parbleu! Qu'en pensez vous?  
Bon Gentilhomme, et pas un sous”

If so, remember Richard's himself again, and make free  
use of the enclosed cheque on Cadell for L 50 He will  
give you the ready as you pass through, and you can pay  
when I ask Put horses to your carriage and go hidalgo  
fashion We shall all have good days yet

“And those sad days you deign to spend  
With me, I shall requite them all,  
Sir Eustace for his friends shall send,  
And thank their love in Grayling Hall”<sup>2</sup>

[Lockhart]

W S

TO WILLIAM WORDSWORTH

MY DEAR WORDSWORTH,—Nothing in the world can be  
more convenient than your own visit and your sisters  
here & as many of your family as you find it convenient<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> “I had meant to make a run into Lanarkshire for a day or two to see  
my own relations, and spoken of carrying my second boy, his namesake,  
then between five and six years of age with me in the stage coach When  
I mentioned this over-night at Abbotsford, he said nothing Shortly  
after I got home came this billet’—Lockhart, chap lxxx

<sup>2</sup> George Crabbe, “Sir Eustace Gray” (1807) See Vol X, p 54 and  
note 3

<sup>3</sup> The Walpole Collection preserves three letters from Wordsworth of this  
year In that of 20th July from “Rydal Mount—sometimes called Idle Mount,

We are always at home & my son in law Lockhart lives near me and we can be constantly together My daughter is delighted with the prospect of seeing Miss Wordsworth and it is not possible to take us aback all this month I propose about the end of September to sail for Naples in hopes of [renewing] my health by the climate which is recommended I will scarce I think delay beyond the last week of the month Yours with the greatest esteem

ABBOTSFORD 2 September [1831]

WALTER SCOTT

[Wordsworth]

and in your address of your last, misnamed Mount Rydal" (see Vol. XI, p. 370) Wordsworth announces the entire satisfaction of Mr Christian with Scott's explanation and the approaching marriage of Wordsworth's elder son with a Miss Curwen, a member of the family of Christian (On 2nd August 1830 Christian had written "The explanation, which you so handsomely propose to give in your new Edition, will be satisfactory to a large class of your Northern Readers, and entirely so to myself"—*Walpole Collection* See letter to Christian, 28th July, Vol. XI, p. 384) Wordsworth says he would gladly visit Scott but is prevented by forthcoming visits from Hamilton, Professor of Astronomy in Trinity College, Dublin, and from his brother, the Master of Trinity College, Cambridge Moreover, a greater obstacle is the illness of his daughter, who must be sent to the seaside His sister also has been seriously ill with consequences which will be felt till the end of her life He goes on to make enquiries as to the length of time for which copyright endures according to the now existing law On 29th August he states his intention of setting out "with my Daughter in ten days, if you could receive us with comfort to yourself and Miss Scott If it does not suit you my dear friend to receive us, pray do not let this offer embarrass you I am in sad spirits about public affairs The Whigs have, I fear, subverted this antient & noble Government God protect us" Another communication, written in another hand, is dated from Carlisle on 16th September It informs Scott that he and his daughter are on their way to Abbotsford, and that, owing to a serious increase of his eye complaint, they have been delayed two days at Halsteads on Ullswater He adds that a nephew of his, a distinguished student of Christ Church, is accompanying them to Scotland, but has taken the Newcastle road and intends to join them at Abbotsford He mentions this so that if the nephew should arrive first "he may be no restraint upon you whatever Let him loose in your library, or on the Tweed with his fishing rod, or in the stubbles with his gun & he will be no trouble"—*Walpole Collection* The nephew is Charles Wordsworth (1806-92), later Bishop of St Andrews, Dunkeld, and Dunblane On Scott's behalf Laidlaw writes to Cadell on 20th September that Sir Walter had been hoping to have a quiet time with Wordsworth, but the house is full of company and in a perfect confusion—*Stevenson Collection* It was in this month that Wordsworth composed his sonnet, "On the Departure of Sir Walter Scott from Abbotsford, for Naples," and included in *Farrow Revisited, etc* (1835)

TO DAVID LAING

MY DEAR MR SECRETARY,—I return the proof corrected I seldom keep autographs if they are in my own bad handwriting and have not as far as I remember seen the copy or sketch which I originally made of the Romance since I gave it to poor Weber I would write it over how[ev]er with pleasure if I were not going abroad for my health with no great expectation of mending it Curiously enough the story alluded to in Woodstock<sup>1</sup> is not in the British Magazine after an accurate [?] search I wrote you some time since that Lord Stafford had given up thoughts of the Green Knight so John Richardson may proceed as soon as he pleases I should think that Will[i]am & the Werwolf<sup>2</sup> would be a treasure Happening to have two reprints by Mr Utterson of the Chevelere assigne (du Cygne) I send you one as a duplicate [is] of no use to me which you may consider as valuable Mr Caddell carried it with him this morning I have pickd up a Descrittione del Regno del Scozia inscribed to Queen Elizabeth Christofero Hatton Roberto Dudleio Conte di Leicestria & Franc[es]o Walsinghamo It is a thin folio printed at Anvers [il] imo [di] Gennaio 1588 I think you gave me some account of this work

I am going away sad enough as I feel no great certaint[y] of ever returning again in which case my presidency shall another take Alwa[ys] Dear Mr Secretary most faithfully yours

WALTER SCOTT

19th September 1831<sup>3</sup>

[Edin Univ Lib]

<sup>1</sup> This would seem to be the story referred to in Note, "Signal of Danger by the Token of a Feather" See *Woodstock*, Border Ed., ii Note iii, p 364

<sup>2</sup> For which see Vol IV, p 453 and note 1, Vol VII, p 143 and note 2 On 25th August John Richardson had been balloted for admission to the Maitland Club — *Walpole Collection* The *Chevelere Assigne* reprint by Utterson was published in 1820 See *A L C*, p 276 The *Descrittione* is by Petruccio Ubaldini (1524 ? 1600 ?) See *A L C*, p 230 It was published by the Bannatyne Club in 1829

<sup>3</sup> This date is in Laing's hand On 21st September Laing, acknowledging

TO WILLIAM BURN,<sup>1</sup> ARCHITECT [EDINBURGH]

MY DEAR SIR,—I enclose the inscription for Helen Walker, which you will be so good as to commit to Mr Ramsay's care Mr Cadell will pay him all expenses whenever he reports that the monument is complete and place it to my accmpt

I entreat your kind attention to this if you think any moral is necessary

Respect the grave of Poverty  
when combined with the  
Love of Truth and Dear Affection

This just as you think [best] having no time to correct it as I expect to set sail on Tuesday I have written Mr Cadell on the subject Mr Walter Dickson took some share in [the] erection of the monument and I dare say would give a look at the work I am always yours, With best wishes,

LONDON, 13<sup>th</sup> October, 1831

WALTER SCOTT

[*Walter S Dickson*]

TO ROBERT CADELL

[13<sup>th</sup> October 1831]

MY DEAR SIR,—I sent a letter yesterday to be addressed to you but foolishly addressd it to George Huntley Gordon at the Admiralty instead of the Treasury It covers a letter for Mr Burn<sup>\*</sup> the Architect telling him what

the gift of Utterson's volume and informing Sir Walter that Madden has undertaken to publish the *Green Knight*, says that Cadell, "being desirous apparently to sift the Woodstock matter to the bottom, I have looked about for such books as contain any particulars" These he now sends with one or two notes—*MS 869, Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>1</sup> William Burn (1789-1870), architect of numerous mansions in Britain as well as of several public buildings in Edinburgh, consulting government architect for Scotland The *Edinr P O Directory for 1830-31* has "Burn, William, esq architect, 131 George street" For Helen Walker and Walter Dickson see Vol VII, p 360 and note 3, Vol X, pp 297 and note, 298, Vol XI, pp 303 and note, 304

inscription I wish to put on the monument of Helen Walker the original of Jeanie Deans and authorizing [you] to pay any charge for paying any sum for the same under £20 I have sent to Huntley Gordon this morning and he has promised to inquire after the packet at the Admiralty I have some idea that I have from old recollection addressd my letter to Mr Stark<sup>1</sup> instead of Mr Burn who is the person with whom I have been corresponding about the said sum who now reports the said monument finishd Believe me always faithfully yours

WALTER SCOTT

We keep our purpose of going aboard tomorrow Mrs Scott does not go as Walter's leave is so short

It was a ship & a ship & a ship of fame  
Launchd off the stocks bound to the main  
With a hundred and fifty brisk young men  
All pickd & chosen every one  
Capt Glen was our Captain's name  
A very gallant & brisk young man  
As bold a sailor as went to sea  
And we are bound to High Barbary etc<sup>2</sup>

[Stevenson]

TO CAPT BASIL HALL,<sup>3</sup> R N , & C & C & C

MY DEAR SIR,—Nothing but an absolute impossibility would occasion my declining a request of yours at this

<sup>1</sup> William Stark, the architect, who had prepared plans for the building of Abbotsford He died in October 1813 See Vol III, p 368 and note 1

<sup>2</sup> Sung by Dick Fletcher in *The Pirate*, Border Ed, II p 240, where it is styled "old ditty"

<sup>3</sup> This letter is among those to Lockhart in the Nat Lib Scot It is sent from Basil Hall to Lockhart with a covering letter dated from Edinburgh, 9th October 1836 "It is perhaps one of the last letters he wrote before leaving England, & is in other respects interesting & curious" When in attendance upon Sir Walter at Portsmouth, Hall had suggested he might write a few words of acknowledgment to the King for so kindly placing a frigate at his disposal "You will perceive that Sir Walter, in some degree, mistook my purpose, for nothing certainly could be further from my thoughts than the idea of suggesting to him to write 'a copy of Verses' at such a time & on such an occasion"—MS 932, Nat Lib Scot

moment especially as you oblige me by saying [that] you who have shewd us unremitted [?] kind[ness] feel indirectly interested in my complying with it But the truth is I was a good writer of what are calld *occasional verses* which to be good must be very good and one would be loth to break down on such an occasion The public are apt to consider one as a shoulder of mutton poet<sup>1</sup> which is more despicable even than a poor fellow that writes for his bread If I ever see an opportunity of returning thanks for this great favour which after all has its drawbacks though I am fully sensible of its advantages which are so great it must be in humble prose It is perhaps enough to say that in attempting the other day to write some thing in Mr [Miss] Wordsworths album I fairly broke down which in such an attempt as you recommend would neither be pleasant nor creditable

If I live I may find this same opportunity when my powers are more fit to grapple with it If I die all debts are paid In the mean time I take up the boarding Misses excuse If I could I would if I cannot how can I Bad Poetry & forced [?] Panegyrick are the very devil Besides one cannot undertake a task of great delicacy with the various unpleasant feelings by which I am at present occupied and even the present Majesties kindness mus[t] not make me forget what I owe to the memory of George IV who permitted me to call him a personal friend If you consider all thes[e] things together and separately you [will] hold me excused in the present case and I will endeavour to make it up when I can & perhaps sooner than I can now hope for When I do write I write fast enough Suppose for instance I should inscribe to you a Romance in my best manner making proper mention of the King in the dedication & supplying you with an early copy for the Kings library table This would be more

<sup>1</sup> The phrase, "The Leg of Mutton School of Poetry" was introduced by the reviewer of an anonymous poem, *Fleurs*, in *Blackwood's Magazine* for June 1821 (see pp 345 50), the reviewer doubtless imitating Lockhart's well known "The Cockney School of Poetry"

easily done & more graceful and less courtierlike in its appearance I am with a deep sense of your kindness affectionately yours

WALTER SCOTT

PORTSMOUTH FOUNTAIN INN

26 October [1831]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CAPTAIN BASIL HALL

MY DEAR CAPTAIN HALL,—As the wind seems determinedly inflexible I cannot employ my spare time better than in making a remark or two on this novel which as you are kind enough to set an ideal value upon [it] will be perhaps enhanced in that respect by receiving any trifling explanations and particulars that among the numerous creatures of my Imagination the author has had a particular partiality for the Antiquary<sup>1</sup> It is one of the very few of my works of fiction which contains a portrait from life and it is the likeness of a friend of my infancy boyhood and youth a fact detected at the time by the acuteness of Mr James Chalmers<sup>2</sup> Solicitor at law in London This gentleman remarkable for the integrity of his conduct in business and the modesty of his charges had been an old friend & correspondent of my father in his more early and busy days and he continued to take an interest in literary matters to the end of a life prolong[d] beyond the ordinary limits He took accordingly some trouble to discover the author and when he read the Antiquary told my friend William Erskine that he was now perfectly satisfied that Walter Scott of whom personally he knew really nothing was the author of these mysterious works of fiction for that the character of Jonathan Oldbuck of Monkbarns was drawn from the

<sup>1</sup> Hall had acquired the original MS Scott wrote this comment upon it at Portsmouth See Hall's *Fragments of Voyages* (1833), III, pp 321-4

This should be *George* Chalmers See footnote to Scott's autobiographic fragment in Lockhart's *Life*, chap 1, and our Vol I, p 43 and note

late George Constable of Wallace Craigie of Dundee<sup>1</sup> who dined when in Edinburgh twice or thrice with my father every week & used to speak of my sayings and doings as [those of] a clever boy I was extremely surprized at this detection For I thought I had taken the utmost care to destroy every trace of personal resemblance I had no reason to suspect that any one in London could have recollected my friend who had been long dead and lived in strict retirement during the last years of his life I took an opportunity to enquire after the general recollection which survived of my old friend at an occasion when I chanced to be "oer the water" as we say his house was in ruins his property feu[e]d for some commercial [purpose] and I found him described less as a humorist which was his real character than as a miser and a misanthrope qualities which merely tinged his character I owed him much for the kindness with which he treated me I remember particularly when I resided for a time at Preston pans with my aunt Miss Janet Scott one of those excellent persons who devote their ease & leisure to the care of some sick relative George Constable chose to fix that residence I have always thought from some sneaking kindness for my Aunt who though not in the van of youth had been a most beautiful woman At least we three walkd together every day in the world and the Antiquary was my familiar companion He taught me to read and understand Shakespear He expland the field of battle at preston pans of which he had witnessd the horrors from a safe distance Many other books he read to us and shewd a great deal of dramatic humour I have mentiond [this] in the second or authors edition but less particularly than I would wish you to know

The sort of preference which I gave & still give this work is from its connection wt the early scenes of my life

<sup>1</sup> See Vol XI, p 223 and note George Constable died at Wallace-Craigie in 1803, in his eighty fourth year



And here am I seeking health at the expence of travel jus[t] as was the case with me in my tenth<sup>1</sup> year Well ! I am not the first who has ended life as he began and is bound to remember with gratitude those who have been willing to assist him in his voyage whether in youth or age amongst which I must include old George Constable and yourself—

WALTER SCOTT

PORTSMOUTH 27 *October* 1831

[*Winterbotham*]

TO JAMES SKENE OF RUBISLAW, EDINBURGH

[Extract]

MY DEAR SKENE,—Our habits of non correspondence are so firmly establishd that it must be a matter of some consequence that sets either of us a writing to the other [and] must be rather of uncommon occurrence and you know I must account it too valuable to be neglected when I tell you that on my part it consists in a wish to do something which may oblige our friends of the royal Society to whom I owe so much for their long and constant indulgence As it has been my lot to see the new Volcanoe calld Graham[s] Island either employd in establishing itself or more likely in decomposing itself and as it must be an object of much curiosity to many of our brethren I have taken [it] into my head that even the very imperfect account which I can give of a matter of this extraordinary kind may be in some degree valued <sup>2</sup>

If you think my dear Skene that any of these trifling particulars concerning an interesting fact can interest their pursuits you are free to communicate them either to the Society or to the Club as you judge most proper

<sup>1</sup> He means “seventh” See early chapters in *Lockhart*

For the full description intended for the Royal Society see this letter as printed in *Lockhart*, chap lxxx

I have just seen James<sup>1</sup> in full health but he vanishd like a Guilty Thing when forgetting that I was a contraband commodity I went to shake him by the hand which would have cost him ten days imprisonment I being at present in quarantine and a contraband commodity We saw an instance of the strictness with which this law is observed In entering the harbour a seaman was brushd from our yard arm He swam strongly notwithstanding the fall but the Malteze boats of whom there were several back[d] from him to avoid taking him<sup>2</sup> up for fear of the Quarantine law and an English boat which did take the poor man up was condemn'd to ten days imprisonment to reward the benevolence of the action

It is in the capacity of Quarantine prisoners that we now inhabit the decayd grandeur of a magnificent old Spanish palace which resembles the Pantaloons of the Don in his youth a world too wide for his shrunk shank But you know Malta where there is more magnificence than comfort though we have met many friends and much kindness

My best Compliments to Mrs Skene to whom I am bringing a fairy cup made out [of] a Nautilus shell which was the only one which I found entirely on Grahams island the original owner had sufferd shipwreck I beg to be respectfully remember[d] to all friends of the Club  
Yours ever with love to your fireside

WALTER SCOTT

FORT MANUEL ISLAND OF MALTA

23 November 1831

The situation is delightful and the weather enchanting If climate can do me good this surely must but as yet I cannot say much to that point I am in my usual spirits however and look so well that I believe my Malta friends think I am shamming Abraham If our Siege of Malta

<sup>1</sup> "James Henry Skene, Esq, a son of Sir W's correspondent, was then a young officer on duty at Malta"—*Lockhart* See Vol X, p 158 and note 1

<sup>2</sup> "Them written, we amend

answers as I hope the authors proceeds may enter Messrs Cout[t]s to assist us on our return when I hope to bring a thumping journal with me for of course we must not expect travelling to be without its [*blank*]<sup>1</sup>

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> Here follow a few remarks about the best way to send a box of specimens

1832

To J G LOCKHART

[Extract]

MY DEAR LOCKHART,—I have written with such regularity that <sup>1</sup> I do not recur to this painful subject I hope also I have found you both persuaded that the best thing you can do both of you is to come over here where you would find an inestimable source of amusement many pleasant people and living in very peaceful & easy society I wrote you a full account of my own matters but I have since more complete [information] I am ashamed for the first time in my life of the two novels but since the pensive publick have taken them there is no more to be said but to eat my pudding &c and hold our tongue Another thing of great interest requires to [be] specially mentioned You may remember a work in which our dear and accomplishd friend Lady Louisa condescended to take an oar and which she has handled most admirably <sup>2</sup> It is a supposed set of extracts relative

<sup>1</sup> Here follows a rather confused sentence referring to the death of John Hugh Lockhart, who had died on 15th December 1831 See *Journal* [January 16 23] 1832

<sup>2</sup> Scott refers to *Private Letters of the 17th Century* See Vol VI, p 480 and note, Vol X, p 275 and note 2 What would appear to be one of these letters (watermarked 1829), written in Lady Louisa Stuart's hand and entitled "From the Nobleman, when at Court, to his lady, is preserved in the Nat Lib Scot (*MS 911, f 88*) In June 1831 Scott had written to Francis Scott If you turn your thoughts to belles lettres the best critick I know would be Lady Louisa Stuart Indeed I do not know a person who has the half of her taste and talents or could do a young author half so much good Lady Louisa unites what are rarely found together a perfect tact such as few even in the highest classes attain with an uncommon portion of that rare quality which is called genius As a Lady she has the art of communicating criticism without giving pain' —*Polwarth Collection*

to James VI from a collection in James VIth's time the costume admirably preserved and like the fashionable wigs more natural than one's own hair. This with the lives of the Novelists and some other fragments of my wreck went ashore in Constables [crash] and were sold off to the highest bidder viz to Caddell for himself and me. I wrote one or two fragments in the same style which I would wish should according to original intention appear without a name and were the[y] fairly lightly let off there is no fear of their making a blaze. I sent the whole packet either to yourself or Caddell with the request. The copy which I conclude is in your hands by the time this reaches you might be set up as speedily & quietly as possible taking some little attention to draw the publick attention to you & consulting Lady Louisa about the proofs. The fun is that our excellent friend had forgot the whole affair till I reminded her of her kindness and was somewhat inclined like Lady Teazle to deny the Butler and the Coach horse. I have no doubt however she will be disposed to bring the matter to an end. The mode of publication I fancy you will agree should rest with Caddell. So providing that the copy is come to hand which it usually does though not very regularly you will do me the kindness to get it out. My story of Malta will be with you by the time you have finished the letters and if it succeeds it will in a great measure enable me to attain the long project[ed] & very desirable object of clearing me from all old encumbrances and capering as rich a man as I could desire in my own freehold. And when you recollect that this has been wrought out in six years the sum amounting to at least £120,000 it is somewhat of a novelty in literature. I shall be as happy and rich as I please for the last days of my life and play the good papa with my family without thinking on pounds shillings and pence. Caddell with so fair a prospect before him is in high spirits as you will suppose but I had a most uneasy time from the interruption of our correspondence.

However thank God it is all as well as I could wish and a great deal better than I ventur[ed] to hope After the siege of Malta I intend to close the 8vo of Waverley with a poem in the stile of the Lay or rather the Lady of the Lake to be a L'Envoy or final pos[ts]cript to these tales The subject is a curious tale of chivalry belonging to Rhodes Sir Frederick Adam will give me a cast of a steam boat to visit Greece and you will come and go with me We live in a palazzo which w[ith] a coach & the supports thereof does not table included cost £120 or £130 pounds a month So you will add nothing to our expences but give us the great pleasure of assisting you when I fear literary things<sup>1</sup> have a bad time We will return to Europe through Germany and see what peradventure we shall behold I have written repeatedly to you on this subject for you would really like this country extremely you cannot tread on it but you set your foot upon some ancient history and you cannot make scruple as it is the same thing<sup>2</sup> whether you or I are paymaster My health continues good and bettering as the Yankees say I have gotten a choice Manuscript of Old English romances left here by Richard & for whic[h] I know I have got a lad can copy them at a shilling a day The King has grant[ed] me liberty to carry it home with me which is very goodnature[d] I expect to secure something for the Roxburghe Club Our posts begin to get mor[e] regular I hope dear Baby is getting better of its accident poor soul Love to Sophia and Walter Your affectionate father,

WALTER SCOTT

[January 1832]

[Nat Lib Scot]

<sup>1</sup> "thinks" written, we amend

<sup>2</sup> "time" written, we amend

TO MRS SCOTT OF HARDEN <sup>1</sup>

NAPLES, PALAZZO CARAMANICO,  
6th March, 1832

MY DEAREST MRS SCOTT,—Your kind letter of 8th October, addressed to Malta, reached me only yesterday with a number of others which had been tarrying at Jericho till their beards grew. This was in one respect inconvenient, as I did not gain the benefit of your advice with regard to my travels, which would have had a great influence with me. Moreover, I did not learn the happy event in your own family till a newspaper told it me by accident long ago. But as my good wishes are most sincere, it is of less consequence when they reach the parties concerned, and I flatter myself I possess so much interest with my young friends as to give me credit for most warmly wishing them all the happiness which this auspicious event promises. The connexion must be in every respect agreeable to the feelings of both families, and not less so to those of a former generation, provided they are permitted, as I flatter myself, to take interest in the affairs of this life.

I envied your management of the pencil when at Malta, as frequently elsewhere, it is quite a place made to be illustrated, by the way, I have got an esquisse of Old Smailholm Tower from the pencil of Mr Turner. Besides the other advantages of Malta, it possesses John Hookham

<sup>1</sup> Harriet Scott, *née* Bruhl, daughter of Hans Maurice, Count Bruhl of Martinskirch. She married Hugh Scott, twelfth of Harden, in 1795. Their fourth daughter, Anne, had married on 27th December 1831 the Hon Charles Baillie, Lord Jerviswood, second son of George Baillie of Jerviswood. See *Burke's Peerage*, Keith S. M. Scott, *Scott 1118 1923*, pp. 136-37, and letter to Henry Francis Scott, 10th January 1831 and note, Vol. XI, p. 456. Sending for the *Life* many letters she had received from Sir Walter, Mrs Scott of Harden writes to Lockhart on 1st November 1832: "Tell me if you would wish to have the last letter I recd from him, it is from Naples & a very clever letter, a few words left out which I have put in in a copy I took of it as it was not easy to read." —*Lockhart Letters*, MS 935, *Nat Lib Scot*.

Frere,<sup>1</sup> who is one of the most entertaining men I know, and with whom I spent much of my time

Although I rather prefer Malta, I have no reason to complain of Naples. The society is very numerous and gay, and somewhat too frivolous for my time of life and infirmities, however, there are exceptions, especially poor Sir William Gell,<sup>2</sup> a very accomplished scholar, who is lazier than I am, and never out of humour, though worried perpetually by the gout, which he bears with the greatest complaisance. He is engaged in vindicating, from the remains of the various public works in Italy, the truth, which Bryant and others have disputed, concerning the Roman History, as given by Livy and other authors, whom it has been of late fashionable to discredit. The Dilletante Society have, greatly to their credit, resolved to bring out this interesting book.

It has been Carnival time, and the balls are without number, besides being pelted to death with sugar-plums, which is quite the rage. But now Lent is approaching to sober us after all our gaiety, and every one seems ashamed of being happy, and preparing to look grave with all his might.<sup>3</sup>

I should have said something of my health, but have nothing to say, except that I am pretty well, and take exercise regularly, though as Parson Adams says, it must be of the vehicular kind. I think I shall never ride or walk again. But I must not complain, for my plan of paying my debts, which you know gave me so much trouble some years since, has been, thank God, completely successful.

<sup>1</sup> John Hookham Frere (1769-1846), diplomatist and author, contributed to *The Anti-Jacobin* and Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Poets*, in 1818 retired to Malta, where he died.

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Gell (1777-1836), archæologist and traveller. Scott evidently refers to his *Topography of Rome* (1834). To this work the Dilletanti Society, of which Gell was 'resident plenipotentiary' in Italy, contributed £200. 'Brvant' is Jacob Brvant (1715-1804), the antiquary J. B. S. Morritt, who was 'arch master' of the Dilletanti Society, had also differed from Bryant in maintaining the existence of Troy. See A. Dalziel, *Hist. of the Univ. of Edinr.*, 1 pp. 157, 58, 160, 170, 175.

<sup>3</sup> Cf. Vol. X, p. 392 and note 1, where Scott quotes Swift on Lent.



and, what I think worth telling, I have paid very near L 120,000, without owing any one a halfpenny—at least I am sure this will be the case by midsummer I know the laird will give me much joy on this occasion, which, considering the scale upon which I have accomplished it, is a great feat I wish I were better worthy the kindness of the public, but I am at least entitled to say

“ ’Twas meant for merit, though it fell on me ”

Also some industry and some steadiness were necessary I believe, indeed, I made too great an exertion, but if I get better, as seems likely, it is little enough for so happy a result The young people have been very happy—which makes me think that about next spring I will give your couple a neighbourly dance It will be about this time I take the management of my affairs again You must patronise me

My love to Henry, as well as to the young couple He should go and do likewise —Your somewhat ancient, but very sincere friend,

WALTER SCOTT

[*Lockhart*]

TO WILLIAM LAIDLAW

[Extract]

I have been turning the Siege of Malta into one of the best romances I ever wrote in the beginning of the 17th century The interest turns on the changed manners of the European nations wh[ich] about [that] time began to renounce the Doctrines of Chivalry whilst they made great changes both in manners and morals while reductions & alterations took place in proportion If I can hit it which with you for an amanuensis I would try to do I would finish my work soon I [am] amusing myself with studying in the Museum to which the King gives me a particular[ly] favourable access

How does the Polwarth catalogue com[e] on I am reading out some old english romances & what reminded

me of your undertaking a young Neapolitan priest is copying a language of which he does not understand a word into a most beautiful hand & very exactly and thinks three Quattrones which is just a shilling per day is quite enough as he said he was decently clothed [*MS torn*] subsisted & lodged for the said shilling a day Their soldiers however have as high pay as ours and the Swiss regiment about twice as much great part of which goes for liquor being the most drunken of mankind The troops are very fine looking men & say themselves that except fighting they understand every other part of a soldiers duty as well as any troops in Europe I am ever yours

WALTER SCOTT

PALAZZO CARAMANIGO [CARAMANICO]

CHIAGA NAPOLI

17 September 1833 [PM 8th March 1832]<sup>1</sup>

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MONSIEUR ARTHUR SCHOPENHAUER,<sup>2</sup> IN UNIVERSITÄT,  
BERLIN

Sir,—I was far from well when I received your card of yesterday I am sorry this prevented me the honour

<sup>1</sup> Probably written in late February to arrive by 8th March

<sup>2</sup> Arthur Schopenhauer (1788-1860), the German philosopher of pessimism To the address of his letter Scott has added "Nuremberg 32 Gasse" with some illegible words Schopenhauer had left Berlin in 1831 to live in retirement at Frankfurt When, in the first edition of the *Life* (1837-38), Lockhart supposed that Scott's entry in the *Journal* for 16th April 1832 was 'perhaps the last specimen of his [Scott's] handwriting' he was corrected by a Mr J Calder Stewart, who, from Leamington on 4th April 1838, informed Lockhart that in an hotel Travellers' Book he had found, under date of 12th May 1832, the two words 'to Scotland' written in Scott's hand—*MS 935, No 83, Nat Lib Scot* This information, without giving the informer's name, Lockhart duly recorded in a footnote to the second edition (1839) But the above letter of June 1832, the date when Scott was at Mayence, coupled with Charles Scott's definite endorsement, prove that they were both mistaken For further accounts of the last months of Scott's life see, of course, the closing pages of *Lockhart*, see also letters from Anne, Charles, and Lockhart to William Lardlaw, 27th September 1831 to September 1832 (*MS 860, ff 37-42*), as well as the *Letter-Book of Charles Scott 1831-2* (*MS 917, Nat Lib Scot*)

of receiving your visit as it has interfered with similar opportunities durin[g] my little tour of the same sort I am with best thanks for your politeness Sir Your most obedient humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

FORTRESS OF MAYENCE 3d of May [June] 1834 [1832]<sup>1</sup>

Endorsed "These are the last words my poor father ever wrote C S" [Charles Scott]

[Edin Univ Lib]

<sup>1</sup> Scott reached London on 13th June, where he lingered till July. On the 7th of that month, from London, Lockhart thus wrote to William Blackwood: "Within the last 48 hours Sir Walter Scott has recovered so much of his physical strength as to induce his Physicians to comply wt his earnest desire to be *at home*. In short he sails for Edinr tomorrow evening, accompanied by my wife & her sister, & most probably by myself. But all this is to [be] kept private, as there are all sorts of reasons why his arrival & presence in Ednbgd shd be unknown beyond Dr Aberc[r]ombie & Dr Ross. It is meant to stop there merely for a consultation—or at most for a day—the object being to reach Abbotsford as soon as possible. I must add that there is no sign or hope of essential improvement. The utmost we can say is that the Physicians can do nothing more, & that it is only the question whether the sad scene of *obscuraton* is to last for weeks or months. I suspect not many of the former. Truly yours, [signed] J G Lockhart"—*Archives of Messrs Blackwood & Sons, Ltd*

And on 21st September Lockhart writes from Abbotsford to Croker: "At this day at ½ past one p m it pleased God to terminate the long & hopeless affliction of your old friend, ever most warmly attached to you, Sir W Scott. He died without apparent pain. You will be sorry, though not surprised, to learn that Sir Walter leaves his worldly affairs in a truly wretched state and that after killing himself by efforts to put them right"—*William L Clements Library, Ann Arbor, Michigan*

LETTERS FROM SIR WALTER SCOTT TO HIS  
WIFE THESE LETTERS WERE DISCOVERED  
IN 1935 IN A SECRET DRAWER IN THE DESK  
IN THE STUDY AT ABBOTSFORD

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LETTERS TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER BEFORE HER  
MARRIAGE TO SIR WALTER SCOTT, IN 1797

LETTERS TO HIS WIFE FROM LONDON IN 1807

LETTERS TO HIS WIFE, WRITTEN ON THE TOUR IN  
THE LIGHT-HOUSE YACHT 1814

LETTERS TO HIS WIFE FROM BELGIUM AND FRANCE  
IN 1815



LETTERS TO MISS CHARLOTTE CARPENTER  
BEFORE HER MARRIAGE TO  
SIR WALTER SCOTT

1797

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TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER,<sup>1</sup> PALMERS LODGINGS, CARLISLE

I WRITE to you my dearest friend altho' I have as yet nothing very interesting to say, not having heard from Lord Downshire. Indeed I am not surprized at this as knowing the value of his Charge, it is very possible his Lordship may wish to speak to the Ld Advocate or some Scottish Member likely to know any thing about me, of which he will have an opportunity at the meeting of Parliament this week. In the mean while you know, tho' you do not like to write you have had the goodness to say you are not displeased with receiving letters and so I take every opportunity of beguiling the tedious moments by scribbling to you. And upon what can my pen run so

<sup>1</sup> The following four groups of letters to Charlotte Carpenter — 12 in 1797, 1807, 1814, and 1815, were found in 1935 in Sir Walter's desk in the Abbotsford study along with letters from Charlotte to Scott. Lockhart had apparently no knowledge of the whereabouts of these letters of Scott, for he notes expressly, in his correspondence with Cadell, the absence of letters of 1814 and 1815. What seems difficult to explain is, that he prints, in whole or in extract, ten of the fifteen written by Charlotte in 1797, he may have seen them in some transcripts made by, or for, Sophia after her mother's death. We have retained the frequently unusual spelling and punctuation in Charlotte's letters. For two letters from Scott to Charlotte which precede the present series see our Vol I, pp 65 and 70. When Miss Nicolson and Charlotte Carpenter left Gilsland they 'took lodgings in Carlisle at a Mrs Palmer's, who kept a china shop in a corner house in [83] Castle Street' — See C. S. M. Lockhart, *Centenary Memorial of Sir Walter Scott* (1871), p 21. 'The Lord Advocate is the Rt Hon Robert Dundas of Arncliffe, nephew of the first Lord Melville, and afterwards Chief Baron. See Vol I, pp 95, 282

readily as upon the necessary arrangements previous to obtaining the dearest desire of my heart Do not again mistake me, my dear Charlotte, far from wishing to dictate it is only my ambition to persuade you, and if I cannot convince *your reason* of the propriety of what I so ardently desire, believe me I shall never wish to influence you by a *Must* which you are so well entitled to treat with contempt You are not ignorant my sweet friend of my profession, tho perhaps you do not know that its nature requires very regular attendance during the sitting of the Courts As it is reckond the most honorable in this country you will not be surpris'd at it's being pursued by many of superior talents and interest to your friend, and I would hardly wish, by any apparent negligence of my Clients interest, to give others an advantage over me Were *my own* Interest only at stake, heaven knows, how cheap I have held it upon occasions infinitely less interesting than the gratification of your slightest wish—but my beloved friend *yours* too becomes involved in mine and then I should *grieve indeed* were it to suffer You see I have profited by all the good lessons I have received and am beginning to talk of *prudence*—I will not speak of my own ardent wish to call you mine as soon as *prudence propriety* and all these extremely wise matters will permit, in case from my expressions upon such a subject I should give you again room to think me “*really out of my senses*” But let me hope you will not think of remaining *very long* in Cumberland, to which you have no particular tie, after I have had favourable letters from London Besides to secure our little fire-side enjoyments will be more easy, the sooner you can think of a journey to Scotland, for a number of little matters will be necessary to secure them which will be best arranged in the beginning of the winter season Dearest Charlotte do not be angry with me for hunting all this and believe me my principle object is your happiness, tho even that is but a selfish idea since it is the only means of securing my own I hope you will be agreeably amused

during the Hunt Do not make too many captives as I think Carlisle can very ill spare it's beaux, and you, let me hope, intend to be very cruel When you look upon you[r] dumb acquaintance you will find him very near as entertaining as my friends here have discovered the original to be I break involuntarily all your rules of politesse & am turned very silent & stupid My only amusement is galloping on the Sands in the forenoon and my evenings are spent in translating little tales from the German, which perhaps may serve, pour pasetemps, when I have my lovely friend to read them to—O how happy I shall be to study your amusement and how ambitious I shall be of success in so pleasing a task How I long for such days

I sincerely & earnestly hope to hear from L[ord] D[ownshire] soon—perhaps he may hint his intentions first to you—if so—I am sure you will write—I am sure you will not delay a moment even to relieve me from a part of my anxiety were it but by a single line Adieu ma belle Amie Je vous aime toujours

WALTER SCOTT

[before 7th October PM Oct 1797]

[Nat Lib Scot]

#### TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

I HAVE been these three days in anxious expectation of a letter from my dearest Charlotte Why am I still disappointed? It really begins to make me very unhappy for not knowing the cause of your silence my fancy conjures up a thousand each more distressing than another Perhaps you have left Carlisle—Perhaps you are not well—and the worst *perhaps* of all—perhaps you have forgotten me in the gaieties of the Carlisle Hunt<sup>1</sup> Dear Charlotte

<sup>1</sup> On 22nd October Charlotte writes 'Your last letter my dear Sir contains a very fine train of *perhaps*, and of so many pretty conjectures, that it is not flattering you to say you excel in the art of tormenting yourself, as it happens that you are quite in the wrong in all your suppositions I have



do not suppose I listen to this last supposition for a minute at once—Are you angry with me for the subject of my enquiries or is the Task of satisfying them a painfull one, if so let me know and you shall hear no more of them Do you really think that your Birth were it the most splendid in Britain would raise you in my opinion or would sink you were it otherwise—my esteem & affection are founded upon very different qualities and are unalterably your own, while you continue to value them—I would soothe national or family fancies where I could do so without going out of my own road, but otherways I know very well how to despise both Do not be angry with me for my importunity but write me a few lines which will still I think have time to reach me before Lord Downshires Letter which I hope will remove every obstacle to my Leaving this place instantly How happy shall I be to be near you once more and to have all these doubts removed which at present torment me Believe me you will meet freinds here who will receive you with the utmost affection, and do not think that either *Pride* or *Prudence* reign among us with a very intolerable sway I have been upon the lookout for a house which I think, with your approbation, I should wish to take *ready furnishd*, for the first half year, as it would save us much embarassment at our outset & give you time to consult your own taste in the purchase of furniture next Spring It would also render it unnecessary for us to make any longer stay *here*, than what we might exactly find agreeable I would consider any

been waiting for Ld Downshire's answer to your letter, to give you a full answer to your very proper inquiries about my family Miss Nicolson has *advised* me to wait for Ld D's letter, so pray have patience, she says that when she did offer to give you some information you refused it, that you must wait now Now can you think that I will give you an answer about the house before we have heard from London, that is quite impossible, and I believe you are a little out of your senses to imagine I can be in Edingburgh before the 12th of next month, O no my dear Sir, no, you must not think of it for *this great while* the Hunt is to begin the last day of this Month, till then we remain in lethargy—I am expecting every day to hear from my Brother, you may tell your Uncle that he is Commercial Resident of Salem"—*Nat Lib Scot*

house we may take for the winter as a temporary accommodation only, because it will be much more easy to settle ourselves to our minds in Spring when many families leave town All this shall be as you please, so pray say something about it when you write The instant I hear from Lord D—— I shall write to you, perhaps it may be tomorrow, but if he takes time to make any enquiry about one Walter Scott it may be a little longer & therefore I think I shall still hear from you first for you really must allow me upon this occasion to tease you out of your— shall I call it *Laziness* You write with the same ease & spirit with which you converse and therefore you have no apology Adieu my sweet freind, when you read this hurried scrawl have some pity upon my anxiety and excuse me for expressing it strongly Did I not love you so sincerely I should be more indifferent upon the subject Do not fear but you shall have laughing enough in our ancient Metropolis—which aboundeth with Quizzes not a few If you project any change of place you must let me know Farewell, my beloved Charlotte—God bless you

WALTER SCOTT

*Edinr 18th Octr 1797*

You must attend that I—O Let me say—that *We* should be in Edinr before the 12th of next month when our Courts meet

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

Will you scold me, my dearest freind for using the freedom to introduce a stranger<sup>1</sup> to your acquaintance I will engage that he shall not intrude upon you unless you think it worth while to seek his company when *par hazard*, you are inclined to throw a moments recollection upon your absent freind He resembles me in *gravity* and I believe you may *quiz* him as much as you please without

<sup>1</sup> The miniature of Scott, for which see letter to Charlotte of the 29th, p 58

his offering a word in reply, so that there are at least some points of Likeness betwixt us

Seriously my beloved Charlotte do not mortify me by refusing the inclosed If you think me premature in requesting your acceptance of it, you need only consider, that should you form a resolution to blot the original from your heart you can, let me hope with at least equal if not greater ease, throw the copy into the *Eden* Upon the footing we stand there can I think be no impropriety in my request Even under the most painful supposition I can form, still you may not dislike to recall at a vacant hour the features of one who could live & die but for you—even altho' fortune should tear you from him

But dear Charlotte I hope much better things—especially if your noble freind does not set too much store by the good things of this world As for my freinds there is but one point, upon which you have promised me full satisfaction—and then—*then*—dear dear Charlotte you will soon have an opportunity of comparing the miniature with the original I am only afraid of Ld D for with regard to my relations should they adopt any absurd whim upon the subject I have alluded to so as to interfere with my happiness my resolution is *fixd and unalterable* that I will leave both them & this country to seek my fortune abroad But I have no reason to think that any prejudice of this foolish nature can possibly occur My beloved girl how I envy this little packet—it will soon be with you—be near to you & perhaps viewd with some affection—while I am chand like a gally slave at a hundred miles distance from all I love Do not be angry with me for sending the inclosed at least till I have an opportunity of pleading my defence in person Soon, *soon* may it be—*Amen*—Ever Ever Thine

WALTER SCOTT

*Edinr Tuesday [24th October 1797]*

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

## TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

I HAVE to thank my beloved friend for her two letters—the second was a relief *beyond what I can express* for the first surely left me under the impression that I had been unfortunate enough to offend you, an addition which was very unnecessary to my depression of Mind. When you were angry at me for insisting upon an inquiry which you certainly have satisfied with so much ease & credit to yourself, you surely my dear Charlotte did not recollect that I have other people besides myself to satisfy & that to do so in this country it is really necessary that I should say something of your family and parents<sup>1</sup>—without doing this I could not promise that even your beauty & accomplishments would atone, let me come as near the truth in describing them as I can, for my ignorance in this particular. And let me add that nothing but such an explanation's being *immediately necessary* could have led me to urge you to write or do any thing else that was disagreeable to you. I do not know whether I am most *angry at myself* for using expressions capable of being mis-

<sup>1</sup> Charlotte writes on 25th October. Indeed Mr Scott I am not at all *pleased* with all this writing, I have told you how much I dislike it, and yet you still persist in asking me to write, and that by the return of the Post, O you really are quite out of your senses, I should not have indulged you so soon in that whim of yours, had you not given me that hint that my silence gives an air of Mystery. I have no reason that can detain me in acquainting you that my Father & Mother were French, of the Name of Charpentier, he had a place under Government, their residence was at Lyons, w[h]ere you would find on inquiries that they lived in good repute, and on *very good style* I had the misfortune of losing my Father when very young before I could know the value of such a parent, after my father's death we were left to the care of Ld Downshire, who had been his very great friend, my Mother went after to reside in Paris, as she had always been very desirous that we should be Educated, and even christen[ed] to the Church of England, we were sent to our Guardian Ld D under whose care we have been left entirely, as I very soon after had the affliction of losing my Mother, our taking the Name of Carpenter was on my Brother's going to India, to prevent any little difficulties that might have arisen before I conclude this famous Epistle I will give you a little hint that is not to put quite so many *Must[s]* in your letter, it is beginning *rather too soon*, and another thing is that I take the liberty not to mind them much, but I *expect* you to mind me, you *must* take care of yourself, you *must* think of me —Nat Lib Scot

construed or *grieved* at your knowing me so little as to suppose me capable of requiring the *hint* at the close of your first letter Do me the honor Miss Carpenter to believe that I should never have paid my addresses to a Lady to whom I should think it necessary either *sooner* or *later* to use the *Must*, in the sense you have understood it—and let me add that were I to be *trop recherche* in my expressions in our present situation that would be but a poor security for my continuing so hereafter—as it is, I think, you must be content with seeing the worst of me before hand—only unless you mean to hurt me more than I can describe never again suppose, that I can intend any thing harsh or peremptory however careless my expressions may be—I love you my dear Charlotte as I do my own eyes, as I do my own soul but the warmth of that very attachment may sometimes hurry me into vehemence of expression which I do not intend especially as I never read my letters a second time

And now my beloved freind having made my apology or penitence call it which you will, how shall I find words for the *dear* task of thanking you *a hundred thousand times* for your reception of my Stranger<sup>1</sup>—O he will do little in awakening your remembrance, compared to the picture I bear in my heart of your person your looks your features and all that makes you so dear to me O if your little Companion could speak the sentiments of his likeness how little could he say that had not you for its object I *must* think of you—how easy for me is it to obey that command—if you had meant me a penance *indeed*, you should have bid me think of something else, or resumed your old

<sup>1</sup> Acknowledging receipt of the miniature, Charlotte writes on 26th October “The *Stranger*, the very great likeness he bears to a friend of mine will in dear him to me, he shall be my constant companion, but I wish he could give me an answer to a thousand questions I have to make, one in particular, what reason have you for so many fears you express, have your friends *changed*, pray let me know the truth, they perhaps dont like me *being french* Do let me know, write immediately, and I hope it will be in better spirits—farewell my dear friend et croyez moi toujours votre Sincere C Carpenter ’—*Nat Lib Scot*

“*forget me*” and then—even Charlotte’s *must* could not have been a law to her friend

I will love Lord D as well as I can do till I have his final answer, but I fear his determination very very much, and did you ever know any one who loved those whom they feared If it be as I wish believe me not you yourself shall go beyond me in attachment to your benefactor, if not—I am afraid I shall be in danger of hating him very cordially With regard to my friends I can at present only say that my fathers very infirm state of health has prevented me hitherto from coming to a final discussion of the Subject with him as agitation of any kind is unfavourable to him—he is very old and his temper very warm & affectionate but he retain[s] a few of those prejudices both national & clannish which were almost universal in his day tho’ they are now dying out in Scotland I have little apprehension of any thing like serious opposition on his part, *mais il faut des menagemens* When he knows you, I am sure you will be a prodigious favourite and you must not think the worse of him because his character is markd with those little blemishes Were he to be obstinate upon a point in which my happiness is so nearly concernd I am firmly determind to resign my prospects here and seek my fate in the West Indies and my freinds well know that if my resolution is taken, heaven & earth cannot divert me from carrying it into execution But my sweet freind I wish I had as little real ground of apprehension from Ld D as I have from my father & freinds but with him lies the rub Your gaities will be now about commencing Do not tire yourself as you must reserve spirits to dance & laugh wi’ our bra’ Scotch Lassies & Lads—& take care of catching cold Adieu Adieu ma chere ma douce Amie—Souvenez vous de

GAUTIER SCOTT

29 Octr 1797 EDINR

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

## TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

My dearest Charlottes letter<sup>1</sup> was doubly acceptable to me as it came quite unexpected and covered *three sides of paper*, how shall I thank her for such an exertion and on the morning too of the first Ball Believe me, my Love, your former letter reachd me when I was something like a Man without a skin who is fretted even by the touch of a feather, otherwise I never could have taken my sweet freinds *quizzing* more seriously than it was meant—and so we will dismiss the subject What would I have given to have been of your party at the Ball especially as I have the mortification to think you would see there without distinguishing him one of the most intimate freinds I have in the world and who I earnestly wish were near me at this moment His name is *Capt Murray* of *Symprum*<sup>2</sup> of the

<sup>1</sup> Of 31st October “You must know me very little my dear Sir to suppose only for a moment that I could be offended at any of your expressions, I am *really* now *very angry* with you, what a pretty notion you must have of my *temper*, pray never have such another thought again, in my opinion, it is making me appear to a great disadvantage All your apprehensions about your friends makes me very uneasy, at your Father’s age prejudices are not easily overcome, old people you know have so much more *wisdom* and *experience* than we have, that we must be guided by them, if he has an objection on my being french, I excuse him with all my heart, as I dont love them myself, as for fortune, it is true that mine is quite uncertain, tho’ my Brother has been gone to India only near nine years, yet his situation is such that he allows me very handsomely which will be between four and five hundred a year, with the prospect of an encrease, I have heard from him, and I hope these last letters will settle the business at the India House O how all these things plagues me, when will it end, and you to compleat the matter, you talk of going to the West Indies, I am sure your Father, and *Uncle*, says you are a *hot heady* young man, *quite mad*, and I assure you I join with them, and I must believe that when ever you have such an Idea, you have then determined to think *no more* of me I begin to repent of having accepted your Picture, and indeed I should have refused it, had I not been afraid of giving you *pain*, I will certainly send it to you *back again*, if you ever *mention* or even *think* about the West Indies I think I hear your Uncle calling you a *hot heady* young man, pray is it not so this Evening is the first Ball, we are expecting Mrs Bird every moment, dont you wish to be of our party, I guess your answer, and I can assure you it would give me infinite pleasure”—*Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>2</sup> See letter to him, 21st December 1797, Vol I, p 86 “You may perhaps have remark’d Miss C at a Carlisle Ball, but more likely not, as her figure is not very frappant ”

Perthshire Light Dragns which were to be at Carlisle on Mondy last He is a most excellent young Man, and wholly uncorrupted by the possession of a large fortune which fell to him early in Life

As my father has withdrawn his opposition to my marriage I have no longer any reason to think of the West Indies, where however in case of his persisting to thwart me I should *unquestionably* have gone, were it only out of the *Christian* principle of sheer revenge So pray if you *really love* the little picture and do not wish to break my very heart do not think of returning it I am afraid from what fell from my father upon the subject, his intentions are to afford me little or no assistance at least for the present—this is rather unkind as he could easily afford to part with all that I would expect without interfering with his favourite plan of purchasing property & a Majority for my brother<sup>1</sup>—and more especially as I have often been a slave to the Interest of the rest of the family I would fain hope that he will depart from this ungenerous idea so unworthy of himself & of what he has always led me to expect—but in the meanwhile I should be highly culpable were I to conceal his present resolution from you I am actually *crazy* with impatience to hear from Lord Downshire,<sup>2</sup> surely if he had meant to discountenance my

<sup>1</sup> John Scott, born 1768 He entered the army in 1791 and died unmarried in May 1816 Several letters from him, when abroad in 1791-96, to his mother are preserved in the Nat Lib Scot

<sup>2</sup> For Lord Downshire's letter to Scott, 29th October, and Charlotte's to Scott, 4th November, see *Lockhart*, chap viii, and for Scott's reply to Lord Downshire, 5th November, see present work, Vol I, p 77 Charlotte replies to Downshire on 4th November Last Nights Post brought me your letter for which no words can express the thanks and gratefulness of my heart, for the interest you have taken in my welfare Your approbation insures me happiness, and also the satisfaction of knowing that having your sanction I am sure of acting to my Brother's wish I have sent your Lordships letter to Mr Scott, I believe it will bring him here very soon, I will then try to persuade him to differ our marriage until I have heard from my Brother, as such an occasion is always attended with some little expences, and has he is not *rich* we had better wait for the Pagodas, I should not like to go into his family without having a little of the needful"—Letter in the possession of the late Mr James Glen



addresses, he would have written instantly, so I please myself with thinking he has taken time to make enquiries O I am not afraid he will hear any thing against me but my poverty & that I told his Lordship myself enough about I cannot deny that some of my freinds are pleased to think me a little of the *hot-headed* character you describe, but that is because they do not know my Charlotte, and it is only because my Charlotte is blind to her own merits that she is not sensible how much every one who knows her must love her As to myself I can with boldness appeal to my Judgement for the approbation of my attachment, which is less founded on your personal Charms than on your good sense and sweetness of Temper, and which has ever increased as I was taught to know you better You need not be the least apprehensive of your reception among these *wise* folks I shall take care to arrange matters so as to make it as agreeable as your heart can desire and whenever I have the happiness of seeing you I shall have a great deal to tell you about my manœuvres I am at present a little way<sup>1</sup> out of Town upon some business, so have not an opportunity *faire vos bausemains a Made ma Mere* I have no doubt they will be most acceptable The Capt makes most regular enquiries after you My Sister will I am sure be most happy in your acquaintance You have spoke her sentiments most truly I shall not wish you to make any stay in Georges Square Friends at a distance, you know, sometimes agree best Lord Downshire's letter will I hope bring all matters quite even It is provoking Dear Charlotte, to think how much puzzling & real distress is occasioned by people taking upon them to judge for others from what regulates their own happiness<sup>2</sup> If his Lordship should think so, next—and if he does not—I will love him so well—one *excepted* I think I shall hardly love any one better You see I am in a fair train of obeying

<sup>1</sup> At Selkirk, according to the addresses of his letters to Downshire and Shortreed, 5th November, Vol I, p 78

<sup>2</sup> Cf letter to Jessie, Kelso, Vol I, pp 23

you in this particular If you meet Murray (take notice I mean *Murray* of *Symprum* for there are others in that Corps of the same name) I do not bid you exactly *love* him but I think you will *like* him—but I suppose the Regt has marchd from Carlisle Do make an acquaintance of him if he comes in your way Take care of yourself and do not catch cold and wrap well up after dancing—you are half accountable to me for the care you take of yourself, & O how angry I shall be, if I do not find as usual “health on your Cheek & Sunshine in your eye” I could cover a great deal more paper but *it may not be* Farewell, my dearest Charlotte, God Almighty bless you

WALTER SCOTT

3d Novemr 1797

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

I WROTE my dearest Charlotte a few lines from the seat of my friend Col Russell but from the complicated system of the posts perhaps this may come first to hand <sup>1</sup> It will give my Love pleasure to learn that I found my friends here particularly my father & mother in the very best disposition tqwards our little plans and I have no hesitation to assure you that nothing will be wanting upon their part to make your reception pleasant & comfortable My mother wd have written but this being the day of Communion, which is very rigorously observed by the presbyterians she has postponed it They all agree in thinking with Miss Nicolson that you had better come to *your own house* at once where my Mother will either receive you or wait upon you as soon as you arrive A freind to whom I had intrusted the commission has been very active in searching for a house but that I mentond is the only one

<sup>1</sup> After receiving Downshire's letter on 5th November, Scott went to Carlisle On his return he broke his journey at Ashiestiel, the residence of his cousins, the Russells, and from there wrote a short note He was back in Edinburgh by the 13th See Vol I, pp 77, 79-80

likely to answer and in consequence of the very uncommon demand which has this season taken place the old Jewess Lady Macleod<sup>1</sup> has thought proper to raise her rent two guineas—I must see her tomorrow & make the best bargain I can, for tho the house is really dear & attended with some other objections, yet it is handsomely furnishd & well situated & in short the only one likely to suit us Edin-burgh was never so full as it is to be this winter In spring many families leave town & we shall have our choice among empty houses As soon as I can get the house & when my Mother has found me a *Cook* (not to begin too soon with the *airy diet* upon which you propose to regale me) I shall take possession of my little palace and endeavour to get matters a little *organises* Dear, dear Charlotte how sorry was I to leave Carlisle<sup>2</sup> on Wednesday Morning & how often did I look back upon the towers of its Castle & Abbey till they mixd with the blue sky Next

<sup>1</sup> We do not know who 'Lady Macleod' is, but the *Edinr Directory* for 1797-98 gives "McLeod General Normand McLeod, No 16 George's street, south side"

<sup>2</sup> According to an informant, a Mrs Halton, niece of the Birds, in C S M Lockhart's *Centenary Memorial*, when Scott made his visits to Carlisle at this time he put up at *The Crown and Mitre Coffee House*, in English Street'—p 21 Charlotte writes on 14th November "You surprise me much at the regret you express you had of leaving Carlisle, indeed I cant believe it was on my account, I was so uncommonly stupid I have made a determination of being pleased with every thing, and with every body in Edinburgh, a wise system for happiness, is it not I have inclosed the lock of hair, it is not for Bracelets as first intended it is to be a Hoop ring, the hair plaited rather broad, give me a good specimen of your taste, let it be very *handsome* I have had almost all my hair cut off, Miss Nicolson has taken some, which she sends to London to be made to something I believe of a Tooth pick-case, but that you are not to know, as she intends to present it to you pray undeceive that *wise* Mr Russell in that strange Idea he has taken of my being dependant on Miss Nicolson, I dont like it, I think that now he will find she is not quite so rich has he *generously* made her, but I cannot very well be surprised at such conjectures, when she took so much upon herself I have heard from my friends in London, with whom you will be acquainted, they expect that if you go to London you would make their House your own, they are good people, and I believe they love me sincerely Ld Downshire is trying to have the plate sent over and I believe we shall have a visit from him on his return from Ireland'—*Nat Lib Scot* For Scott's reply to this, 17th November, see Vol I, p 79 The "friends in London" are the Dumergues

night I slept at Ashestiel where I was very anxious to be in order to bespeak for the best beloved of my heart, the freindship of two relations, half sisters of my Mother, who have it much in their power to facilitate you[r] introduction into the better society in Edinr & who I am sure will leave nothing undone that is in their power They will be our neighbours in the New Town & I really rely a good deal upon them both as affectionately attachd to me and as being of an age & situation more suited to active exertion in your behalf than that of my mother My last expedition to Carlisle has betrayd my situation here—about which you may believe I am but little solicitous—there are many conjectures, some of which would entertain you, but Claud Russell being the only person who can put the *Natives* upon the right Scent has not faild to make use of his superior information by assuring every person that it is *certainly* Miss C—— & that she is a most agreeable & accomplishd young Lady—that he hopes the match is a prudent one, tho' She is entirely dependant upon a wealthy relation with whom she resides &c &c All this diverts me excessively as I learn it thro' those whom I had previously trusted with my secret, but I have requested them as the matter can no longer be kept private to put it upon its right footing whenever it is mentiond I expect soon to hear from Mr Bird, who I think will not be displeased to forge the fetters that are to bind my sweet freind to me forever—it shall be *my* care to line them with *Down* How often I think upon our fireside tetes a tete in your little drawing room and how much I long again to tell you how *much* how *dearly* I love my Charlotte You will hear from me again very soon—in the mean while pray do write—I do not expect *long* letters—& far from insisting upon *three* pages I shall be delighted with half a one provided you will write as *often* as you can find convenient Do not forget to send me the lock of hair—the longest you can find among your “*nut-brown*” curls—I really want to display my taste in the way of disposing of it as well as if

possible to recommend myself to the friend for whom it is intended In the mean while pray offer my most respectful Compliments to Miss Nicolson and shew her such parts of this letter as regard our domestic arrangements I am sure that for your sake they cannot be indifferent to her and she will readily favour us with her opinion as to their propriety & perhaps help us out where we are a little at a loss

My brother Capt Scott is in the Country My mother joins in most affectionate remembrances I have not yet heard from my Uncle <sup>1</sup> My father is better and chats a good deal about my establishment He has not yet proposed to contribute towards making it more comfortable by any pecuniary assistance—I think this must follow Addio ! Addio ! Carissima Carlotta mia—being your first Italian lesson from

WALTER SCOTT

12th <sup>2</sup> [PM 13th November 1797]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER <sup>2</sup>

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—After about five hundred interruptions which have occasioned her missing the post, my Mother has finished her letter which I hope for my sake you will receive kindly I assure you, that you may safely consider it as speaking the undisguised sentiments of her heart and may therefore believe her congratulations are real and cordial

<sup>1</sup> Robert Scott of Sandyknowe

<sup>2</sup> This is written on the remaining three pages of a letter from Walter's mother to Charlotte of 12th November, in which she writes "I take with pleasure this opportunity of congratulating you upon your approaching marriage with my son May the Almighty God bless you both with all the happiness this world can bestow & his Favour which is better than Life and all its enjoyment Walter has taken a House which He thinks will answer for the present I hope soon to receive you in it & be assured of a most hearty welcome & that I will do all in my power to make things agreeable Mr Scott joins Thomas & me in Love to you please offer my best Compts to Miss Nickelson —*Nat Lib Scot*

I have taken Mrs Macleods house at 10 Guineas for six months, that is till the next term when we will have had time to look about us. In the mean while I hope you will be pleased with what I have done, remembering always that this is the only house to be had which could have suited us. My Mother is very busy seeking us a Cook, & whenever she is successful then I remove my camp from Georges Square to Georges Street. I have written to my Uncle but have had as yet no answer. I spoke to Dr & Mrs Rutherford whom you saw at Gilsland—they beg me to say they will be most happy to endeavour to render Edinburgh agreeable to their new niece. This is the first day of our Courts sitting. I had no sooner entered the Court House than I was saluted on all hands with jokes & Compliments—these I bore with the indifference of an iron-browd Lawyer—for to our tribe, you know, *blushes* are seldom very troublesome—after taking a house there was no hopes of lying quiet—so I must let the storm of curiosity and *Quizzing* take its course—& I think I may safely laugh as a win[n]er.

Our whole family is now reassembled for the winter—John & my Sister returnd from Ashestiel to day and my two other Brothers are also come home & beg that you will keep a corner of your freindship for them—they all send their most respectful & affectionate Compliments. We have been just examining a Maid who seems a likely subject—I mean my Mother & I. I fear you will be dissappointed in the Cookery of any we can find especially as it is less a study here than in England. Apropos—as I was looking into My Mothers Cookery Book with a view of qualifying myself for my new situation of a Housekeeper—the first receipt which caught my eye was “To set down a dinner when there is *nothing* in the house.” O ho! thought I, here will answer for my fair Charlotte’s *jours margres* with [which] she threatens me—but what a disappointment when this promising receipt began with these words “Take a cold Turkey.” A *cold Turkey* when

there is *nothing* in the house—O Lord O Lord what a receipt Book—and how are my hopes fallen—I would not now insure myself against the Egyptian plague of *Froggs* from which I vainly hoped I should have found a remedy Notwithstanding all this I am impatient to get to this Mansion of *famine*, all my little moveables consisting only of my Scritoire, my clothes, a few books & my Arms are all ready for Transportation and I hope to be in Georges Street in a few days at farthest—and *in a few weeks*—I hope to press its Mistress to my bosom and ask her how she can have the heart to think of starving me I expect to hear soon Mean while with best & most respectful compliments to Miss Nicolson—believe me ever Your sincere & faithful

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 14 *Novemr* 1797

You will, I suppose, write our resolutions to Lord Downshire

I really could not refrain from filling up my mothers letter tho I am sure you begin to think I write enough of my *own* She gave it me open to put on the direction

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

I HAVE been very busy, my dearest Charlotte, in getting our little household establishment into some order and have been learning every day how many little articles are wanting for comfort I shall venture upon nothing beyond what is absolutely necessary till I have the assistance of my sweet girls taste in chusing whatever admits of decoration In the mean [while] to fortify against the fear of absolute starvation I have been victualling the garrison with wine & spirits & porter & cheese & biscuit and I have bought such articles of plate as were indispensibly necessary for immediate use I mean a few spoons

tea spoons &c—it will be very desireable if Ld Downshire should succeed in his friendly endeavours to get over your property in the mean while I shall restrict my little purchase to absolute necessities My Mother has taken upon herself the arrangement of thē lnnens and the House Maid has taken possession & is employd in making them up I think in a day or two at farthest I shall be in Georges Street for good & all I receive a great number of congratulations (a little premature you will say) however I neither confess nor deny unless to particular freinds I have been drilling Robert at serving at table and with a little practice I think he may get over the ground pretty well for a few months He is strictly honest which is a great matter for young Housekeepers My father is not only perfectly reconciled to the match but very impatient to see you I am sorry to say his health appears still very fluctuating, indeed you will see but the shadow of what he was a year ago My Sister <sup>1</sup> sends you her most affectionate Compliments and thanks for your early acknowledgement of her letter—which I also dearest Charlotte considered as *very kind* I have a letter from my Uncle wishing me happiness &c I am sure he will like you when he sees you—indeed you will hardly be surprized at *my* thinking so, but it is founded upon my having always observed you to be a general favourite from the sweetness of your manners and temper My Mother is very kind and very busy employd to her hearts content in cutting table cloths and a great number of such pretty convenient sort of things, an amusement which independent of her real wish to serve us, is in itself by no means disagreeable to her She begs to be affectionately rememberd to you Pray do remember me *handsomely* to Miss Nicolson—the ring is finishd—it is not properly speaking a Hoop one as I could find none with which I was thoroughly pleased but is of the *very newest* London pattern and I think pretty I hope you will excuse this deviation from your directions

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol I, p 115 and note 2



—it was made from the string, but in case it does not exactly fit it can be altered here I shall send it by Monday's stage, pray enquire if it does not appear in due time No word of the Birds—this is a little odd as it is *rather common* to acknowledge directly a letter upon such a subject I have been at Drill this whole forenoon tho the weather was bitterly cold—indeed I am afraid that *ma pauvre petite* will be starved among our bleak northern mountains—however I have settled a good correspondence with the coal Hill—so that we shall have a little more gross flame than what is afforded by the torch of Love which you know to Sheridan's peasant

—thro winter's chilling snows

Is all the warmth his little cottage knows <sup>1</sup>

However I hope the little deity will not be scared away by the aspect of a bright fire and chearfull fireside—and we shall wile him to stay with us, till our locks shall be as white as I fear the streets of Edinr will be tomorrow for it is beginning to snow

And now having told you all how & about it—I shall be impatient to hear you have quite recovered your spirits & bid the winds carry all thoughtfull apprehensions away to the Western Ocean Believe my my dearest Love we shall do very well We have something to live upon in the mean time & I really do not think I was born to stick in the world—conceited enough that last observation, however nous verrons I hope Miss N will like her ring, pray tell me truly when you write whether she does or not In the inside below the setting I have made them put our Initials—C C W S O how I wish that last C would march itself away C S wd do much better besides you know it would save you much *writing* Scott being so much shorter Pensez a moi ever your faithfull

18 Novr 1797

WALTER SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> Epilogue to Sheridan's *The Rivals* (1775), lines 32 33 Scott gives "snows" for Sheridan's "woes"

## TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

I WROTE you a long letter yesterday giving you, my dearest friend, an account full & particular of all my little proceedings I now send the ring<sup>1</sup> which I hope will be acceptable, the shape of the setting has come in place of the *round*, as I was informd by a lady of fashion here whom I consulted upon this important occasion I am very anxious it should *please*—pray write soon & let me know It is just now  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 12 and your lazy Monster is but just up, being confined with a slight cold Tomorrow is to be a very busy day arranging every thing in No 50 Alas ! whatever I can do to make it comfortable it will be very dull till the middle of December and *then then* it will be charming indeed I have not heard from you since Monday and am waxing a little impatient—not so much so however as to begin to *perhaps* What do your Carlisle friends say and are they curious?<sup>2</sup> Have you written to

<sup>1</sup> Charlotte writes on 21st November “I now can inform you I heard last night from Ld Downshire, he is very *much pleased* with your conduct throughout the affair, he also mentions that as you approve, and acquiesce to what he has proposed, that the sooner you draw up the paper, or agreement, what you please to call it, the better, you can enclose it to him Mr Slade and Ld D are to be my trustees, if you write directly, it will perhaps get to Town before he leaves it, he talks of setting off for Ireland immediately The ring arrived safe this morning it is indeed *very handsome*, I am convince now that you really are a *Man of taste*, Miss Nicolson is very much pleased I suppose you are by this time in your new habitation, I hope you wont quarrel with *your company* and that you will not be so *vulgar* as to eat, that is if you are in Love it would be *ungrateful* of me my dear Sir to feel sad, or unhappy, but sometimes *impertinent* thoughts will come and you must make allowances for so great a change, think what a task I have to keep up the good opinion you are please to entertain of me *I fear* you will not think me always quite so *amiable*, but you will find me the same in sincerity of love and attachment’ —Nat Lib Scot

<sup>2</sup> On the 23rd Charlotte replies You wish my dear friend to hear what I do, and conjectures of the wise people of Carlisle, they are such lethargic souls I dont think they have the power of imagination We were last night to one of their *cheerful* parties, and I am sure it will be the last, I never tire of being alone, but often in company A propos I have intirely forgot to mention to you that I have three names, Margaret and C C, it may perhaps be of consequence in the agreement you was to draw up, being never call’d but by the name of Charlotte I have not wrote to the Miss Pattinsons, it was only to be when I was settled in Edinburgh, then you are to be *my*

the Pattinsons according to your promise ? Tell me all your little news, you know nothing can be indifferent to me where my Love is concernd Do you laugh & run about or are you sober sad We shall have M Pon—to assist you here whenever circumstances will suit I think may-be in spring but you remember what I formerly said about that

My little Mare is dancing at the door—quite out of its senses—O *quite mûd* as you say for want of exercise So adieu pour le present

I am returnd half starved to close my epistle and here I find a great bundle of dusty papers lying ready for my amusement during the rest of the evening so I must forsake my *own own* best Charlotte in order to converse with Law folios Adieu ma douce Amie

W S

*Sunday [19th ? November 1797]*

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

GEORGE'S STREET, EDINR  
XXist Novem MLCCIXVIII [*sic*]

Look at *the date* my dear Charlotte, pray look at *the date* and tell me where I am got to now Upon my word I wish you could look in and see me as I sit at present in the midst of the most glorious confusion you can conceive A venerable sage of the law lying in one corner with an old Scotch Song stuck into his dusty pages by way of mark A Book of German plays in another to which a Brief does perhaps the same honour A lawyers gown and coif

*Secretary*, I will give you that appointment, it wont be a very profitable one Miss Nicolson is *very much please* with the Ring, it is indeed very elegant you will I hope end by being very good friends '*Nat Lib Scot* "The Pattinsons" may be some connection of Thomas Pattinson, a retail trader of Alston, Cumberland, and his wife, Margaret Lee Their younger son, Hugh Lee Pattinson (1796 1858), became a noted metallurgical chemist See H Lonsdale, *The Worthies of Cumberland*, iv (1873), pp 273 320 Alston and Gilsland are in the same district of Cumberland

elegantly contrasted with a light Dragoons helmet and sabre—and to compleat the whole a sett of Bedding and linens blocking me out from my own fire side and a brace of hungry Young Lawyers playing at piquet very impatient to attack my bread & cheese & porter I have endeavoured in vain to drive them away & so they may even sit there till I am as ready as they are

In a word I have this evening taken possession of *our* house—O Charlotte how I love that little word *Our* But do you know I am now seriously very anxious to hear from you My Mother joins me in very best love to you She took your letter extremely kind as did my father who also joins in kindest remembrances It happens oddly enough that your Brother at first going to India was intimately acquainted with & in some degree under the Charge of a most respectable relation & friend of my father's Simon Haliburton of Morrislaw<sup>1</sup>—who is now in this country and speaks of him as warmly—as warmly as I could wish to hear the Brother of my Charlotte mentiond, and you may easily believe that is with the very highest esteem and respect <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Or Muirhouse law The Simon here mentioned was the son of the Rev Simon, or Simeon, Haliburton (1720-97), minister of Castleton, Dumfriesshire, 1751-63, and of Ashkirk, Selkirkshire, 1763-97 The son was in the East India Co's service See Scott's *Memorials of the Haliburtons* (1820), pp 58-60 See also our Vol I, p 83

<sup>2</sup> Charlotte replies on the 27th "Does Mr Haliburton reside in Edinburgh I shall be so happy to see a person with whom my Brother was acquainted it must have been the two first years that Charles was in India, ask him if he ever hears from him Mr & Mrs Bird are here, we sup'd with them last night, they are going on a visit to Mr Thomson, Miss Nicolson approves much of the *Seal*, she advises you not to let it be a very expensive one I am very glad you don't give up the Cavalry, as I love any thing that is *stylish* (cf Scott's letter of 17th January 1820 to young Walter at the time of Lockhart's engagement to Sophia—"I think Mama would have liked a little more *style*," Vol VI, p 120) What an idea of yours was that, to mention where you wish to have your *bones laid*, if you was married I should think you was tired of me, a very pretty Compliment *before Marriage* I hope *sincerely* that I shall not live to see that day, if you have always those *Cheerful* thoughts, how very *pleasant* and *gay* you must be"—*Nat Lib Scot* For the seal which Mr Bird commissioned Scott to get engraved for him, and for Scott's reference to the burial place at Dryburgh Abbey, see his letter to Charlotte, 22nd November, Vol I, pp 82-3 Two aspects of the seal are reproduced as Plate IX (opposite p 26) in C S M Lockhart's *Centenary Memorial*, etc

Is it not very odd how such accidents happen in life I have met with another acquaintance of your Brother with whom I am more slightly acquainted—a Coll Campbell who also speaks of him in the highest terms Altho' his Affection & Kindness to you was alone sufficient to persuade me he must be like you yet I need not tell you how much I am pleased to hear all who know him unite in his praise I am sure I shall love him much as well as Lord Downshire whose behaviour has been so extremely handsome I wish we had as speedy a prospect of seeing the former as the latter—dear Charlotte how wellcome we would make him to *Auld Reekie* which you must know is the Scotch nickname for Edinr I intend in my next to send you some description of this house that you may make up your mind upon some difficult points which I have been discussing in my own mind—for tho very pleasant there are some great inconveniences attending the way in which it is laid out After all it is most fortunate I closed the Bargain for this very day 16 Guineas pr month was given for a much worse house & furniture in the neighbourhood I hope the ring came safe It was dispatchd by yesterdays fly My Mother returns best Compliments to the Lady for whom it is intended in which I beg leave to join Let me intreat you my sweet freind to write as often as you can I really turn uneasy (tho it is very foolish to be so) when I am long in hearing from you—at present I have not time to ride and am therefore sometimes distressed with violent headaches to which anxiety does not much good I never have them when I can take exercise especially on Horseback I have a view of a stable for Lenora<sup>1</sup> Indeed I should not love to part with her unless you shd think my keeping her quite an unnecessary expence The Borderers, as they call those who are born like me on the Border of England, are used to riding almost from their infancy

When I beg you to write *often* I do not wish to impose the task of writing *long* letters as I know you do not love them All I wish is to hear from you frequently when you

can spare ten minutes just to say that you are well Adieu  
Charlotte—think often & kindly upon Your Affectionate

WALTER SCOTT

Direct in future—No 50 *Georges Street*

[21st November 1797]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

EDINR 25 *Novemr*, 1797

I CERTAINLY am deeply in arrear to my sweet freind and I can only say that my own heart has been telling me so every minute these two days The truth is when I begin to write to my Charlotte I never know when to leave off, and for these two days past I have had a very different occupation indeed, in bringing up all my law Business which the confusion attending my removal had thrown behind I received a most polite & what I like a great deal better a very kind letter from Miss Nicolson, you cannot doubt I shall strive to be upon the most freindly terms with a Lady whom you love & call your fiend Lord Downshires gallantry was very well judged car il se fait diablement froid—however I think I will not allow you *just actually to starve* upon the journey if it is possible for *kindness* to keep you warm

Out of my *infinite Grace & Condescension* I shall certainly give houseroom to the China and wd recommend to you to send any other bulky articles by the same conveyance

I answerd Miss Nicolsons letter last night—it was the only half hour I could possibly spare and a precious scrawl it must have been for I could hardly keep my eyes open having been up almost all night To day my hands are clear of any pressing business—I dine abroad & also sup Tomorrow I have a little party here of gentlemen—my Brother John is to be *Landlady* I hope he will be in good humour, tho at best he will make but a wretched repre-

sentative of my sweet Charlotte I hope she will soon fill that place and I am very sure I shall find her *amiable* qualities as permanent as her *affection* I am often occupied in fancying to myself how you will like your house, how you will like the people, and all the little et cœteras that no body but a lover as affectionately attachd as I am would think upon I am enraged to death at the intolerable delays of the Law, I judged it proper to submit what you call the *agreement* to the consideration of counsel as I did not wish to trust my own opinion where you were so deeply concernd and they have kept it till this moment I have just despatchd it to the Post House I hope it will still catch Lord D before leaving London and have written<sup>1</sup> to him that I should wish to have it examined by an English Lawyer as our forms differ essentially from theirs It must then be returnd to me to be drawn out upon Stampd paper & subscribed by us both It settles upon Lord D & Mr Slade<sup>2</sup> (with whose name and profession & place of abode you must acquaint me) as your Trustees all the fortune you derive from your Brothers liberality So that in point of fortune you will be entirely your own Mistress I hope I will be in time able to do more for you—there is really no great generosity in making you a present of what is already your own I am glad you are likely to get your plate if any thing I have got should be useless we can have it exchanged for something else—in

<sup>1</sup> Scott's letter of 23rd November, for which see Vol I, p 83 On the 26th Charlotte writes to Downshire " [Mr Scott] will send the paper for your Lordship's inspection and approbation and when it is returned for his signature and mine, if there is no obstacle, our marriage will take place soon after, which will be about Christmas on my brother's going to India he was very intimately acquainted & indeed under the charge of a relation of Mr Scott's father a Mr Haliburton, with whom he was two years in his House, he speaks in the highest terms of him, and also does another gentleman, I am very fortunate to have so good a Brother who is so generally respected It will set me off to some advantage I am more pleased with this circumstance on account of the father and Mother of Mr Scott as they are not *in love*, and Scotch, they hold a great deal of family"—Letter in the possession of the late Mr James Glen

<sup>2</sup> For whom see Vol I, p 122

the mean while I shall make no more purchases of that kind or indeed of any thing not immediatly necessary

In future my Love pray remember direct to me No 50 Georges Street as I do not get your letters other wise till the day is far advanced & I need not tell you how much I grudge every moment that they are kept from me I make you my best Bow for my appointment as Secretary to the *home Department* & I hope I shall discharge the duties of it to your satisfaction Will it be *quite pretty* in me to correspond with young Ladies who only know me by my picture—if not the blame shall be yours I have a letter from Mr Scott of Harden congratulating &c &c He speaks, like all the world, most highly of Ld Downshire—but indeed I need nothing to raise him in my opinion for he has behaved in the most handsome manner in this business and he really loves my little Charlotte I shall write you tomorrow or next day to let you know how my first party goes off—it consists entirely of intimate friends I am angry at the Carlisle quality for their stupidity *Here* a Marriage or the prospect of one is tea-table bread & butter for a month at least—farewell my dearest friend—I love you much much Do not forget your

W S

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

1

EDINR 28 *Novr* 1797

I AM truly concernd that my former letter should have made my lovely Charlotte *triste*<sup>1</sup> for one moment much more for a whole day When I wrote it I was truly

<sup>1</sup> In her letter of the 27th, already quoted in part, Charlotte thus expresses herself What could be the matter with you my dearest friend when you wrote your last letter but one, it was so much out of spirits that you made me very *triste* for the whole day, pray never more complain of being *poor*, are you not ten times richer than I am, remember that I must depend intirely on my Brother, and you have only to depend on yourself and in your proffesion I have no doubts but that you will rise very high and be a *great rich Man*, etc"—*Nat Lib Scot*



fatigued both in mind & body a circumstance which had given my epistle a melancholy turn without my perceiving it My Headaches are very stupifying kind of concerns but then I am seldom troubled with them except at the Spring & fall of the year I was formerly very delicate in my health, now these headaches are the only complaints with which I am troubled & are a kind of Tax which I pay for enjoying a most robust constitution In general I will never try my sweet friends patience unless when I have them and then she will sit with me an evening or two in the year & bear with my stupidity Do not suppose I am anxious about our affairs I am quite sure we will be able to live very decently & genteelly & have the satisfaction to think that our affairs will daily mend I have not got a Stable & coach house yet but shall be provided in the course of the week I love of all things the idea of moving a little in the Vacation, I have been always used to it & I have so much to shew my Love with which I am sure she will be pleased I will make you entirely a little Scottish woman—you shall learn to dance reels & Strathspeys and to do every thing but eat Haggis & Sheepheads I will give you a lesson from a Scotch song which has become a great favourite of mine from some ideal allusions which you can *perhaps guess at*

“O she has left her costly gown  
 Made of the Silk & sattin  
 And she has put on the Tartan Plaid  
 To dance among the \*Bracken      † (heath)  
 She would not have an English Lord  
 Nor be a Lowland Lady  
 But she is away wi’ Duncan Graeme  
 And he has wrapd her in his plaidie ”<sup>1</sup>

In about 3 weeks I think I shall wrap you in *my Tartan plaid* and call myself the happiest of human beings—O I will be so good to my little stranger and love her *so dearly*

<sup>1</sup> Varied from the song, “Bonny Lizie Bailie See Vol VIII, p 491 *et seq* , where Scott quotes the same lines in announcing his son’s engagement

I am afraid my letter would hardly reach Lord Downshire before his departure Do you think I may correspond on the subject of the Contract with your friend Mr Slade He is a professional man and I think it will save much time Were that over I can easily borrow a day or two before the rising of the Courts and then on your arrival here I shall be at your side for the whole Vacation and do my best to be your Master of Ceremonies I have some fear the correspondence with Ireland may be attended with more time which will make me fret excessively I am truly grateful to Lord D for his attentions, say so, my dear *Carlotta* when you write and say so in the prettiest way you can imagine I am glad you approve of my keeping Lenore, tho at one time I thought of having her compleatly broke in for your riding, but her temper is too hot for me to trust you upon her without the utmost anxiety We can put post horses to the Chaise whenever you wish to go to the Country or to take an airing As to the house It contains an excellent & very pleasant Drawing room which will be your seat of empire—a small parlour off it which will be *mine* There is a large glass door of communication between these rooms with a curtain on one side—on the other we will cover it with green baise so that my *agreeable* tetes a tete with my clerk may not disturb you There is a very good dining parlour with a large light closet, which I have put a few Books into & which you can make a place for holding any thing you please There are two bedrooms, both small & rather indifferent & what will be very inconvenient, the principle one enters from the dining parlour like yours at Carlisle We can obviate the main inconvenience arising from this by supping when we have parties in the other parlour—for dinner it does not signify The servants accomodations are very bad a bed [*MS cut off*] off the kitchen for the maid & a kind of Cockloft for the Man Servant to which he ascends by a ladder—if the house was on fire little Robert would be roasted like a Tod in a Hole There are plenty

of Closets presses & these kind of matters with a good little Kitchen My Uncle has taken it into his head to send me a cargo of pickled pork—is not this truly like a Sailor I began this letter on a torn sheet without observing it Have the goodness to admit my humble apologies & permit me the honor to subscribe myself *Madam* your most *obedient* most *faithful* humble Servant

W SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

4 Decemr 1797

I HALF expected to have heard from my best beloved freind this morning and therefore did not write as I intended by last nights post I have no reason to complain of my Charlotte, however, even in the character she least likes, that of a Correspondent You are very good, my Love, and have combated your aversion to the *plaguy writing* as often as I could *expect* in conscience knowing that you feel it as a task to which you submit for my gratification Just now however I am very anxious to know from you whether I may correspond with Mr Slade on the subject of our Contract of Marriage In the present state of Ireland I am afraid *our* Lord Downshire will find enough to do, without our giving him unnecessary trouble and Mr Slade being a Man of Business can see in two minutes whether the deed is drawn as he would wish—besides he is in Londn & I can hear from him regularly You may believe I cannot consent that the Deed should be signd till it is inspected by some one or other of your Trustees, this would be taking upon myself a very unpleasant sort of Responsibility should it afterwards not meet their Ideas or be inaccurately conceived Besides the future comfort of my Charlotte may depend upon this paper and that being the case you will readily believe that I would wish it to be as *secure* as the best advice can make it You

may read all this to Miss Nicolson, who will easily understand the importance of the Subject and assist you with her opinion At the same time pray remember me to her *kindly & respectfully* Perhaps Lord D may return the sketch I have sent him with his approbation in which case I shall have it properly drawn out whenever it reaches my hands I dare say you think all this story extremely dull and uninteresting and that the *Lawyer* is in this letter rather getting before the *Lover*, but believe me my dearest friend it is my sincere Affection for you that dictates what I write *Your Happiness* my sweetest Charlotte will be in future the chief business of my Life, and a very *selfish* pursuit it will be, for in promoting your Happiness I shall be sure to find *my own* I think that if this Business can be arranged by that time (as God send it may, otherwise my feeble stock of patience will fly off entirely) I see nothing in that case to prevent my leaving Edinr about the 16th If we have such a fine sunshine day as this for our journey *my own* Scotland will not appear quite so savage as perhaps Charlotte expects To say the truth It does look a good deal the better of sunshine for we have some tolerably Bleak country to pass thro' Were it Summer I could take you a more pleasant route but in Winter the shortest road is the pleasantest Do not forget to tell me how you like the House, and above all whether I can bring any thing from town that can serve for your accomodation upon your journey *I'll love you dearly* if you'll tell me something you want & pray as you used to say "No ceremony" If you see the Birds on their return I beg to be remembered, I shall write to Mr Bird instantly when I can fix with certainty the day of my leaving Edinr and remember, my beloved friend, that after I have the happiness [*MS torn*] joining, the sooner we leave Carlisle will upon every account be the better I think so at least and I hope my Charlotte does not differ from me in opinion I am sure Miss Nicolson will think so too I still like my Quarters here very well but it is only in the hopes that they will not

be disagreeable to you Some one or other of freinds generally pops in about Supper time which prevents me from tiring so excessively as for want of the *most beloved* of my freinds I should certainly otherwise do I am little abroad because we shall have enough of visiting duty to go thro' with bye & bye—there are few things I tire so much of as large formal parties and almost nothing I like so well as small select society I think we will [have plenty of the latt<sup>r</sup>] At the same time One's situation often calls upon one to make sacrifices of your time to parties you dont much like because it is right & proper you should do so When you are once acquainted with the Society of Edinr the regulation of all these matters will devolve very much upon my Charlotte I am sure we will never disagree upon such points Adieu <sup>1</sup> Adieu Ma Chere Charlotte Aimez moi bien

W S

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

## TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE'S letter has this moment found me, dressing to join the Cavalry—it is one of our Drill days I am glad you think we can hear soon from Lord D——<sup>1</sup> I was afraid he might be shifting his place of

<sup>1</sup> Charlotte writes on 2nd December “I have not heard from Ld Downshire, I think it is almost impossible he can have received your letter, it had first to go to London, and from thence to be sent to Ireland, we can hear from him much sooner than from London, so pray do not fix any time for your coming here, when you have the Contract returned I will let you know, and as you wish me to be franck I will tell you that I do not see the necessity of your Brother's coming, it would give him a great deal of trouble, and would really distress me, I hope you had not mentioned to him you must contrive matters so as we may not see any one, not even any of your family, the evening we get home, we shall be so tired, and such figures that I should not appear to *advantage* I dont believe you can read this scrawl the paper of Carlisle is so bad I can hardly make a mark Adieu my dearest friend, etudiez votre françois, I have a french Grammar for you, remember you are to teach me Italian in return and call forth for all your patience I shall be a stupid scholar”—*Nat Lib Scot*

residence a good deal at present I shall be very impatient till I hear from him both because I am afraid of a storm setting in which might either prevent our journey altogether or make it very unpleasant, and likewise because my Vacation is not long at this time and therefore the earlier we can get to Edinr the better as I will be able to spend my whole forenoons with you while it lasts, which will be till you are pretty well acquainted with the *Carte du pays* When Business is resumed you know I must attend the Courts I shall not think of bringing my brother with me since it would be unpleasant or distressing to you—but you must think of some Gentleman to be present at the Ceremony—at least I believe this is necessary in order to *give you away* Mr Bird or Miss Nicolson may perhaps know if this can be dispensed with I know there must be *two* witnesses to the most private marriage Will you give me leave to write to Mr Bird<sup>1</sup> when the Contract comes to hand, you know I must give him a few days previous notice and it would be a pity to wait the return of post from Carlisle which would be four days and 3 days more before the letter could reach him May I therefore write to him immediatly when I hear from Ld Downshire You know a license must be taken out &c all of which he has kindly promised to manage for us If you wish it I can send the letter I intend for Plumblands<sup>2</sup> under cover

<sup>1</sup> On the 6th Charlotte writes Indeed my dearest friend I cannot *give you leave* to write to Mr Bird, *you* must not do such a thing, when you have heard from Ld Downshire let me know, and I will write you immediately, and *fix the day*, then you can inform Mr Bird of it, one letter can settle it all it will not be so *much time lost* as you seem to think, you must not be in a *hurry*, Miss Nicolson tells me there is no necessity for a nother person to be present at the Ceremony Miss N has bought the Ring, so you have nothing more to do till you have heard from Ld Downshire, but to amuse yourself a *pensez a moi* I find by Miss Atkinson that I am the subject of conversation in the Carlisle parties, to hear the people talk so much about a Marriage, it is as if such a thing had never happend before'—*Nat Lib Scot* In the Carlisle marriage certificate, as supplied in C S M Lockhart's *Centenary Memorial*, the two witnesses at the ceremony were Jane Nicolson and John Bird —p 23

<sup>2</sup> A village six miles N E of Cockermouth, in Cumberland

to you, and you can fill up the *precise day* upon which we shall hope to see him at Carlisle, and thus it will both save time and leave you at your discretion. But remember, my *dear dear* Charlotte I trust to your *generosity* that you will not postpone a minute beyond what you find necessary for making your little arrangements—you see I trust to you implicitly and I really have your comfort as well as my own happiness in view when I assure you of my ardent wish that you should come here as soon as possible. You must take care, (indeed I suppose the precaution is very unnecessary) not to shift your lodgings at least to the Southward, because you would get into another parish and be obliged to reside there a *month* before a license could be obtained. Will you send me the measure of your finger as you did that of Miss N's. I think I had better get it here than at Carlisle, it will not subject you to speculations and *wondering*. After all I am glad it will be unnecessary to enter into any correspondence with your friend Mr. Slade. I only hope Lord D will write *soon*. I am beginning to tire *very much* of living alone and the nearer the time comes when I am to enjoy the Society of my lovely Companion the more intolerable I think my solitude becomes. Don't you think it will be about the beginning of the week after next—Monday perhaps or Tuesday. I think if that paper would but arrive I shall be with my Charlotte before that time, and a day in Carlisle before that of our marriage may surely settle all I have got to do in that brilliant Metropolis of Cumberland. I shall be a judge as I come out of the state of the roads and you may trust the little arrangements of our journey to me. I will take care that every thing both on the road and on your arrival is arranged as much to your wish & satisfaction as the nature of the weather & other circumstances will admit.

I believe I must conclude as our Bugles are sounding. All the family in Georges Square particularly my Mother and Sister join in best Compliments to you and to Miss

Nicolson to whom do not forget to offer mine Adieu  
my dearest Love Think often on your own

WALTER SCOTT

5 Decr 1797

Lady & [the] Miss Rollos<sup>1</sup> have been sounding your  
praises to some relations of mine

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

I HAVE nothing new to tell you, my dearest friend,  
except that my patience is turning really *thread bare* and  
that I am counting the days, hours and moments that  
separate me from my sweet Charlotte I am just come  
from my father's, he is by no means well and my Mother  
confined to her room with a cold They make many  
enquiries about my Love and are very anxious that you  
should be here as soon as possible You complain of the  
cold weather, I hope you feel no greater inconvenience  
from it than it's increasing your disinclination to write, I  
am sure I need not bid you take the greatest care of  
yourself & by no means expose yourself to taking cold  
Be very cautious, my dearest Charlotte, if not for *your own  
sake for mine* I shall endeavour to brush up my French  
in order to do honour to my lovely Mistress I must  
remember it is your mother tongue and that will give it  
double charms to me I am sure I shall have a charming  
Scholar in the *Lingua Italiana*, I only fear I shall be ill  
qualified for the task I have undertaken of teaching you  
It is long since I studied Italian—however I think I shall  
soon recover it—at least I shall try I had a letter today  
from my Uncle accompanying a present from his poultry-  
yard I am afraid it will be all eat up before you come to

<sup>1</sup> Evidently Scott refers to the Dowager Lady Rollo, widow of James, seventh Lord Rollo (1738 84) She was Mary, eldest daughter of John Aytoun of Inchdairnie, Fife, and died in 1817 They had two sons, the eldest of whom (John, the eighth Lord) did not marry till 1806, and five daughters



assist He comes to town and brings with him a favourite Niece of his & who is also a very favourite Cousin of mine <sup>1</sup> I bespeak a *little bit* of your freindship for her as I have always lookd upon her as a Sister She is upon a visit to a friend of ours and will live in the same street I am very glad of this for I think you will love her for a companion and she I know will be happy to be with you and feel very much obliged for any attention you shew her You know being a married Lady & a Matron, you must patronize the little Cousins She is remarkably clever at all little female accomplishments and will help you to make your *work Baskets* a mervelle My Uncle is most hobby-horsically employd in supplying the place of the Kelso Bridge which was carried away by superintending the construction of a Bridge of Boats If his project succeeds it will be a very happy thing for that country I have got a seal for Mr Bird which I think may answer the purpose intended tolerably well—it is very handsome, without being beyond what is proper in expence I shall not forget the unlucky tops I verily believe that these nasty things have travelld five or six hundred miles with me one way and another I hope Miss Nicolson is well—you have not mentiond her lately—I hope you always remember my best Compliments—if there is any little thing in which I can further her accomodation or yours do tell me, my dear Charlotte, it will be using me with a very indifferent degree of confidence if you do not Write to me my best freind as often as the *Cold* will permit, I cannot express to you the pleasure I receive from seeing your hand upon the back of a letter I watch the postman when I think I have one to expect I dare say he thinks me furiously impatient You suspect that writing increases my head Aches—at least my beloved Charlotte, I do not know so sure a

<sup>1</sup> It is difficult to discover which of Scott's cousins was such a favourite Thomas Scott, second son of Robert Scott of Sandyknowe and brother of Captain Robert Scott, had two daughters, Mary and Anne Sandyknowe's third daughter, Jean, who married in 1772 Walter Scott of Raeburn, had one daughter See Rogers, *Genral Memoirs of Scott, etc* (1877), pp xliii, xlv

receipt to cure all my Aches as writing to you except indeed hearing from you

The Captain is well & begs to be remembered My Sister & other Brothers join in most affectionate Compliments—if you do not find us altogether so civilized as your Southern friends I am sure you will overlook little faults in manner when you find that the heart is right *I wish I wish* I had Lord Downshires Letter Pray my sweet friend, do write soon—and tell me whether it may not be about Monday or Tuesday se'night Believe me Charlotte I will *always love you dearly* and be *very good* to my *little stranger* Adieu do not forget your faithful

W S

EDINR 6 Decr 1797

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

EDINR 8 Decr 1797

To tell my lovely Charlotte the delight I always experience at hearing from her would be but to repeat what I have said a thousand times, without ever being able to express half the pleasure I really feel You *must* be *Empress* with regard to all our motions, but as you know in the best regulated governments the Subject is sometimes permitted to petition, I *humbly* entreat you will not be arbitrary in the exercise of the royal prerogative It may be long before I hear from Lord D indeed the State of Ireland is such as at present may find him enough to do <sup>1</sup> I am sure I do not regret any thing half so much as the delay of my letter But when I do hear I depend upon my Loves goodness in fixing as *early* a day as she can

<sup>1</sup> At this time Downshire was in trouble in Ireland, and shortly before his death in September 1801 he was deprived of his Lord Lieutenancy of County Down, owing to his opposition to the Irish Union, and deprived of his militia regiment See *Memoirs and Correspondence of Viscount Castlereagh*, II (1848) *passim*, III (1849) *passim*, C Ross, *Correspondence of Charles, First Marquis Cornwallis* (1859), *passim*

possibly reconcile to her feelings The sooner you enter upon the terrible fortnight which you dread so much, it will you know be the *sooner* over As you are a Bather, you must know that there is nothing like plunging over head and ears at once You will have so much to do and think of, when you take possession of your little palace that you will never think of things which you now fancy very formidable But as I have often said if our arrival is late I must be obliged to leave you much *much* oftener than can be agreeable to either of us, especially while you have to receive the attentions of strangers<sup>1</sup> and may perhaps feel yourself a little the object of Curiosity Apropos of *curiosity*, I am glad to hear the Carlisle folks are awakend from their lethargy It would really be mortifying to excite no surprize in a City, where to judge from the *Antiquity* of its *Maidens* and the *scarcity* of it's *Beaux* a Marriage can be no very common occurrence On the contrary do but think how splendid, to be the Subject of Discussion among Noblesse of unspotted families who live in *pomp & glory*, feast upon *Almonds & Raisins*, and devour pine apples at a Guinea each I hope Miss Atkinson has made you fully sensible of your good fortune in being the object of speculation among such sublime personages I am highly pleased with the arrangement you have made as to my stay in Carlisle To get thro' in one day will be morally impossible at this season of the year Selkirk must be our middle stage I have determined not to bring

<sup>1</sup> On 10th December Charlotte replies "Mr & Mrs Bird have been here, they sup'd with us on Friday, they made many inquiries after you, and desires their best Compts I love them because you are such a great favourite with them, but I am sorry to find that you have invited them to come to Edinbr, they make nothing of going six or seven to one house, I should not be surpris'd if they accept your invitation, you know how very unpleasant and inconvenient that would be at present, Miss Nicolson desires me to tell you to be more careful how you give invitations I am very anxious to hear from Ld Downshire, I am always unhappy while I know him in Ireland I think that you had better write to him in case your letter should be lost, and direct for him at Hillsborough, by Port Patrick You may have an answer in a very short time I already feel a friendship for your Cousin as being one of your favourites"—*Nat Lib Scot*

Lenore I should run the risque of losing her which would be a little smart I therefore mount my trusty Esquire upon a hired horse He is turnd no taller, indeed he is so well suited in size to his apartment, that if you insist upon his growing, I beg it may be by *day*, for if he should grow a couple of Inches during the *night* I question very much whether he could ever get out of his cabbın In other respects the House I think will suit very well for our time It is both pleasant & fashionable which must make up for some inconveniencies If we should wish to keep it for a few months after the term we would get it at a much lower rent Of that afterwards I find our housekeeping will not be cheap—there is a kind of Dearth this winter—besides our mutual inexperience It would entertain you if you saw how gravely I set about arranging my household accounts—but I perceive housekeeping is not my turn I make a monstrous stupid hand of it and never know what I want till the moment that I come to miss it—it will take both our heads laid to put our little matters *en train* But how delightful is the prospect of sitting together and laughing at each others inexperience We will be very happy for we will resolve to be contented and to continue to love each other as we do now I have not been at Georges Square today My fathers health seems to me really very uncertain Dear Charlotte how many reasons both of a delightfull and of a painfull nature, I have to wish our Marriage over Do not however suppose from this that I have any immediate apprehensions but the indisposition or rather decline of One who has possessd such very good health is always alarming Prepare to meet me my best friend with the same affection with wh we parted and Love your faithful

W SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

## TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

I COULD not get a spare moment all yesterday to write to my Love, which circumstance put me into an admirable humour for presiding at a foolish Club—however I bustled thro the task of the day as well as I could I really felt it as a Task especially as some of the people whom I was obliged to be civil to, are not altogether the most agreeable society in the World It is one of the plagues of our profession that to keep your connections in business you are occasionally under the necessity of associating and being upon some sort of habits with people whom you really dislike But you know there is a way of being very polite without encouraging any thing like familiarity It put me in mind of one of your Carlisle parties only substituting noise and nonsense instead of formality and Cards But perhaps my impatience to hear from Lord Downshire made me more disgusted with my situation and company than I should otherwise have been O when will I get his letter, when shall I again tell my own Charlotte how dearly I love her—there is not a thread of Silk in your workbasket half so flimsy and thin as *my patience* has become I sent Robt to the Post House today, for the godly spirit of the presbyterian religion does not allow the letters to be dispersed on Sunday, but it was all one for there were *none* for me I think Saturday is one of your writing days so I shall perhaps hear from you tomorrow, perhaps too from Ld D if I thought I could get his letter a day sooner I verily believe I would set out to *rob the Mail* I have with much ado got a stable & Coach House for which I am indeed very much obliged to the freindship of my neighbour Mr Skene of Rubieslaw<sup>1</sup> who makes room for Lenore in his stable He is a fine

<sup>1</sup> *The Edinr Directory* for 1797 98 gives “Skene Mrs of Rubslaw, No 8 south Castle street, s side” and “Joas Mrs, No 50 George s street, south side” “Mrs Joass” is Elizabeth, daughter of George Abercromby of Tullibody, co Clackmannan She married Major Alexander Joass, Governor of Stirling Castle See *Burke s Peerage* (1880), p 5

young fellow and nothing less than a *Serjeant* in our Corps which I assure you is a mark of no small distinction I am to dine tomorrow with our next door neighbour Mrs Joass—she is a good old Lady enough, a sister of Genl Sir Ralph Abercromby I dare say you will like her parties pretty well Your Avant Couriers, my dearest friend, shall be taken great care off—they will be most wellcome to me, as I shall consider them as a pledge of my Charlottes speedy arrival

To avoid increasing our baggage I shall bring almost nothing with me to Carlisle, so you must not expect me to be a beau *Boots* you know are the ton upon such occasions I mention this that you may arrange your luggage exactly as you use to do I am very much obliged to Miss Nicolson for procuring the ring She is indeed very good I hope she will like Edinr I am sure she will meet with every civility in the power of my friends here to offer I hope the ring is wide enough I am very awkward upon some occasions I dare say I shall blunder in putting it on Have you any furred shoes? if not you must allow me to take care of your poor little feet I intend therefore to bring two pair with me as I hope Miss Nicolson will do me the honor to accept a pair All our Scottish Nymphs use them in travelling Indeed I wish you to be as much dressed in fur as possible, quite *a la Russe* Take the utmost care, my best beloved friend, not to expose yourself—the slightest cold might be very much increased upon our journey You had a little cough when I was last wt you I hope my dear Charlotte it is quite gone Do not go out but in the middle of the day & take great care of damp feet I sometimes thought you are not sufficiently attentive to yourself, not half so much so as to other people—but unless I thought my Love would attend to my present entreaties I should be really very unhappy I am not in the least for people being foolishly anxious about their health, but you are coming to a rougher climate than you have been accustomed to and

that requires double care If I had you but here, I would be so good to ma chere petite Etrangere, and take such care of her that She should not find in her heart to neglect herself least she should give her friend pain I have not been in Georges Square these two days I dine there today They are all very anxious to see you What then must *my* impatience be I could say many things upon the subject of your fears They are very naturall in your situation—but do not encourage them Rely on your own friend I shall study your comfort & happiness as much as I possibly can and if you really love me you will struggle with every discouraging apprehension Do you ever look at your little miniature I have a lock of your hair which I kiss about a thousand times a day How precious does real *Affection* make all these little fooleries—never did it actuate a breast more warmly than that of your own

W S

[10th<sup>2</sup> PM 11th December 1797][*Nat Lib Scot*]

## TO CHARLOTTE CARPENTER

I WILL not—no I cannot even attempt to thank my best my kindest Charlotte for her letter—the pleasure it gives me is far indeed beyond what expression can paint and the Rapture with which I received it made me say & do many things so extremely foolish that if I were to rehearse them you would perhaps repent of trusting yourself to such a Madman I find that the Coach which leaves Edinr on Tuesday at Midnight will bring me in to Carlisle on Wednesday Evening I have agreed with much difficulty to abandon the point of setting out upon Tuesday It is the fast-day, and the George's Square folks would think me riding post haste to the Devil so in compliance with their ideas I have agreed to sacrifice a few hours of happiness One hates sometimes even to offend well meaning prejudices I hope to be at Carlisle early

on Wednesday evening We will have only to sign the Contract—and then on Thursday<sup>1</sup>—Dear Dear Charlotte how I adore you Did you ever know a Man go mad with joy O how slow I shall think my motions Monday & Tuesday will be two very busy days with me to get things here into some order but much will remain for my Love's own Taste I write Mr Bird by this post You will have one & but *one* more letter from me I must close this in great haste or I shall lose the post If bad roads keep me very late on Wednesday which I think impossible, we will go the less way on Thursday Continue, if you love me, to take care of your cold I shall send Robt as an avant courier

I fear I shall miss the post Believe me my dearest and most beloved Girl Ever your own

SCOTT

16 Decr 1797 Mr Bird is to be with us on Wednesday

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> Charlotte had written on the 14th “I heard last night, my dear Scott, from my friends in London, to whom I had apply d for some information about Ld Downshire I find that he has sent the Deed to Mr Slade, which is to be returned to me immediately, I shall certainly have it this week, I will send it to you directly, but not to loose so *much time* as you have been reckoning, I will prevent any little delay that might happen by the Post, by fixing *already* next Wednesday for your coming here, and on Thursdav the 21st, O my dear Scott on that day I shall be yours *for e er*, does not that sound very awful —*Nat Lib Scot*



## LETTERS TO HIS WIFE FROM LONDON

1807

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TO MRS SCOTT, NORTH CASTLE STREET, EDINBURGH

MY DEAREST LOVE,—I arrived here this morning after a very cold journey indeed—we were almost stoppd by the snow at Morpeth & I have seldom felt colder weather than we had every night & morning I am however quite well & have got comfortable Lodgings provided for me by Millar On my arrival I found the surprizing but *most welcome* intelligence that the Ministry were in the act of *going out*<sup>1</sup> & I have just met Lord Dalkeith who is in the secret & says every thing was settled yesterday Castlereagh, Rose, Hawkesbury &c come in & Lord Melville is to be at the head either of the Admiralty or of the Treasury There's a turn for you—match it in your

<sup>1</sup> After the death of Pitt on 23rd January 1806 the Grenville ministry was formed in February and procured the abolition of the slave trade Fox died on 13th September and a General Election was held in October In March 1807 the Catholic question came up over a bill to open commissions in the army to Catholics The bill was withdrawn but the king endeavouring to secure a pledge that the ministry would never again press for concessions, direct or indirect, to Catholics, the ministers resigned The Portland ministry, which took its place, included Perceval, Canning, Hawkesbury, Castlereagh, Camden, Eldon, Westmorland, and Chatham Sir Arthur Wellesley was chief secretary for Ireland These are some of the great men among whom Scott found himself On 27th April Parliament was again dissolved See Brodrick and Fotheringham, *Political History of England*, vol. xi (1906), pp. 43–50 Scott's immediate interest is in the proposed changes in the Court of Session, of which he is one of the clerks, and his own position as working without a salary See his letter to Charles Erskine, 14th March 1807 just prior to his departure for London, and that to Lady Abercorn, 20th July 1807, Vol. I, pp. 358 and 368–70 respectively At this time he lodged with William Miller, the bookseller, Albemarle Street

novels if you can <sup>1</sup> When I think what I witnessd last year in this very place it almost turns me dizzy The Clerks &c all go—adieu a long adieu to all their greatness <sup>1</sup>—So the Law of Scotland will remain as it was or at least be touched with a respectful & lenient hand They must look think & feel rather comically as must the shabby turncoats who went over to them I am sorry W Clerk has lost his Sherifffdom & also for poor Rae—his vote in the faculty was rashly given I have seen the Dumergues &c all well I met Mrs Fitzherbert there & not knowing her blunderd out more of my joy at this political event than seemd to be agreeable to that great Lady I breakfast tomorrow with Lord Dalkeith, I suppose David<sup>2</sup> will cast up tomorrow or next day I will write often without waiting for answers but pray write & tell me all that you do & who takes notice of you & where you go & about the Laird & his sisters & brother not forgetting the Black Child Something may cast up for us in this whirl so I must mind my hits Adieu my dearest Mimi I must write to my brother Clerks about this change which will make the settlement of their matters very easy & me an acceptable Solicitor in their behalf as I believe I will stand very well with the new Ministers having stood by them in hard weather Ever dear Mimi Yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

NO 5 BURY STREET ST JAMES

[20th<sup>2</sup> March 1807]

<sup>1</sup> The kind of novels which were favoured by Charlotte later, in the eighteen twenties, is indicated in a short undated note sent by her to Robert Chambers's circulating library "Lady Scott will thank Mr Chambers to send her by the Carrier three [those?] of the novels she has marked—The Simple Story by Mrs Inchbald, Nature and Art by Ditto, Juvenile Indiscretions [by Mrs A M Bennet], Says She to her neighbour, What? [by Mrs Hofland] Belinda [by Maria Edgeworth], Matrimony by Mrs Meeke, Octavia by Miss Porter, The Spinster's Tale [by Ann Wingrove] If none of these are at home any of Mrs Opie[s] or Miss Burneys works will do <sup>2</sup>—*Watson Bequest Nat Lib Scot*

David<sup>2</sup> is Scott's man servant "The Laird" is young Walter (b 1801) The others are Charlotte Sophia (b 1799), Anne (b 1803), and Charles (b 1805) "The Black Child" is, we conjecture, Camp, the dog

The Question about Catholic emancipation was that on which the King quarrelld with his Ministers—they agreed to pass from the measure but would not promise not to revive it I am invited to meet Canning & Frere at Rose's—they both come in, in high office

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—I have just received your most wellcome letter and I suppose you have long since had mine Davids absence began to excite my wonder & even my apprehension but I am happy to see that he must now be here shortly His absence though inconvenient has been made tolerable by the extreme civility of the people of the house Wolfe Murray & Robison have establishd themselves under the same roof—this is a bore in some respects but upon the whole I am glad to have a little Edinburgh chat <sup>1</sup> I saw the Solicitor today horribly in the dumps but avoided him as I did not wish him to think I was triumphing over him I dined with the Dumergues yesterday—they are all well & happy Mr D goes out of town for the Easter holidays—they pray & keep house so I shall see little of them till these are over I am much tempted to go down with William Rose to Cuffnells his fathers seat & from thence to the Isle of Wight, for there will be no knowing what is to be done about the Bill for the Court for some time untill the Ministry are settled I dine with a party of the *new men* today namely Canning, Frere, our friend R Dundas & Sturges Brown They all express themselves highly delighted with my firm adherence to them in adversity & I hope to reap some good

<sup>1</sup> James Wolfe Murray (1760 ? 1836), admitted advocate, 1782, Sheriff of Peeblesshire, 1789 1810, succeeded Lord Meadowbank on the Bench as Lord Cringletie in 1816 "Robison" is probably George Robinson of Clermiston, one of Scott's early friends in the Volunteer Cavalry (see *Lockhart*, chap viii) Scott writes "Sturges Brown" for William Sturges Bourne (1769 1845), who was a Lord of the Treasury from 1807 to 1809, when he resigned with Canning See Rev L V Harcourt, *Diaries and Correspondence of Rt Hon George Rose* (1860), II pp 349 55 "The Solicitor" is John Clerk, Lord Eldon

fruits from it I think they should in some way or other relieve me of old George Home in whole or at least in part My being on the spot is inconceivably fortunate—not a word of such a plan to anyone if you please Mrs Mimi I have seen poor Colin Mackenzie, he is thin & his voice altered in a melancholy manner—yet he says he is better If he stays in England I should greatly fear the consequences Poor Ellis is in town—weak & emaciated to an incredible degree considering how thin he always was He received me with his usual affection & I have been twice to see him I have dined & spent the day with the Dalkeiths & look in on them every now & then to learn the new arrangements which are now almost complete Tomorrow I dine with Mr Frere & some of the new Cabinet Ministers—there's for you George Robison seems astonished at the attention shewn me here & hints as much On Saturday I think of going down to the priory<sup>1</sup> to see Lord Abercorn

I am heartily glad to hear Mrs Erskine is doing well I hope Erskine will be considered under this new stile of things Rae has I fear ruined his prospects by following too closely the advice of the Roslyn's The people that have been turned out are abusing each other abundantly & Grenville says openly that affairs in Scotland have been managed with more zeal than discretion He had better have made the discovery a little sooner

Lord Melville takes no situation immediately but will resume Scottish patronage<sup>2</sup> Our friend Robert is [to] be at the head of Indian affairs & Lord Wellesly at that of the foreign relations Canning is to be first Lord of the

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the priory at Stanmore, Middlesex

<sup>2</sup> Cockburn, however, declared that Melville never regained his influence in Scotland See *Memorials of His Time* (1856), pp 216-17 Later investigators have come to the same conclusion After the impeachment and acquittal, he was never again in office, and shattered health and broken reputation prevented his further active participation in public affairs —H W Meikle, *Scotland and the French Revolution* (1912), p 217 After 1808 there is little indication that Dundas was able to take a very active part in Scottish local politics He was always there, ready to write personally to voters at their behest,

Admiralty & Percival Chancellor of the Exchequer The separation of Wellesly from the Grenvilles is considered as a *coup de maître*

My health is perfectly good & my spirits would be abundantly so from the joyful change were it not [for] the melancholy state of Ellis & Mackenzie which counter-balances my happiness

Adieu my dearest love—assure the little people of my thanks & affection & comfort old Kiki<sup>1</sup>

As for the driving seat do with it what you please & Believe me ever yours most truly

WALTER SCOTT

5 BURY STREET ST JAMES'S

24 March [PM 1807]

Mrs Birds little boy run away from the Charter House School & occasioned much alarm at Mr Dumergues

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAR MIMI,—I am just going down to Lord Abercorns—after that I come to town on Tuesday & on Thursday I go down to Cuffnells with young Rose I have no time to say more but that I am well and there is a plan on foot to ease my shoulders of the Old Man of the Sea which I will write about distinctly from the priory Address to me under cover to William S Rose Esq Clerk of Parliamt Pray send me plenty of news about the Laird & Sophia Anne & little Charles who I conclude is now totting about very steadily Yours ever

W S

The inclosed is for Davids wife He arrived Yesterday

[PM Mar 27, 1807]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

but he no longer was conversant with every detail in every county'—Holden Furber, *Henry Dundas, First Viscount Melville, 1742-1811* (1931), p 283 "Robert" is Dundas, afterwards second Lord Melville

<sup>1</sup> Kiki "would seem to be a pet name for Camp

TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAREST MIMI,—I promised you a few lines from this place where I found a gay and very pleasant party assembled for the Easter Holidays. Among others is Lady Charlotte Lindsay, married to the Honble Colonel Lindsay (a Brother of Lord Balcarras) and one of the wittiest and most agreeable women I have ever seen<sup>1</sup>. The Marchioness was quite delighted with your little cadeau & proposes to write herself to acknowledge the compliment so I shall leave her Ladyship to say all the pretty things I find I will not be permitted to leave this place till Wednesday & on Thursday I go down to Cuffinells as I believe I already wrote you. After the Recess the parliamentary business will be resumed & I hope the Judicature Bill will be adjusted—the late change has thrown every thing into a temporary confusion but we are working all hands to bring about matters again. I will be glad when that business is so far forward as to allow me to look Northward, but my own interest and the charge intrusted to me by my brethren prevent my thinking of it for two or three weeks at soonest. If there be a new clerk made it seems to be settled and indeed was proposed by the Dundasses without my mentioning it that I shall get the salary and the new brother succeed to George Home. I have some idea that the new Clerk will be our friend George Robinson but this all remains in utter uncertainty—say nothing about it dear Mimi. If they do not make a new Clerk I am determined to claim something else for I think since the sun shines on our side of the hedge I have as good a claim to share in its warmth as any body else. I am sure I did not fear the bad weather.

<sup>1</sup> John Lindsay (1762-1826), Col. 71st Highlanders and seventh son of James (1691-1768), fifth Earl of Balcarras, married in 1800 Charlotte, third daughter of the second Earl of Guildford. Scott's transaction with George Home when the latter proposed to resign his clerkship of Session goes back to the beginning of 1806—see Vol. I, p. 273 and *Lockhart*, chap. xv.

There are assembled here Lord & Lady Aberdeen<sup>1</sup>—the first a very accomplishd young man who promises to make a figure—our old freind Lord Brooke who desires to be rememberd to you Mrs John Kemble & Lady Sutton (not our Lady Sutton but the wife of Baron Sutton) these with the family & some other *fashionables* as the phrase goes make a very pleasant society Sotheby came on Saturday & returns this day We expect the Duchess of Gordon & John Kemble today I hope they will both come for the Duchess will be elbow-deep in politics & bring the very freshest news & I want to know Mr Kemble his wife is a very pleasant woman

When you see my mother will you say that I dined with Genl Stuart<sup>2</sup> & met his daughter Mrs Lewis my old play-fellow—we had a long chat over old stories & She enquired very kindly after my mother

And now my dearest Lotty I am impatient to know what

<sup>1</sup> “Lord & Lady Aberdeen” are George Gordon (1784-1860), fourth Earl of Aberdeen, and his first wife (whom he married in 1805), Catherine Elizabeth, daughter of John James, first Marquess of Abercorn. The others mentioned are Henry Richard Greville (1779-1853), Earl Brooke of Warwick Castle, by “Lady Sutton” Scott seems to mean the third widow of Sir Richard Sutton (1733-1802), first baronet of Norwood Park. The Kembles we already know about. “The Duchess of Gordon” is Jane Maxwell (1749? 1812), wife of Alexander, fourth Duke of Gordon, and for whom see Vol. III, p. 111 and note

From “Malvern Decr 13th 1804” General R. Stuart had written to Scott, sending kind messages to “my dear respected Friend your Mother. During my last visit there [33 George Street South] it occurred to my observation that your Brother Thomas’s behaviour was cold and reserved towards me, which surprised me the more from the conviction I felt, that no part of my own conduct could be intentionally such towards him, or towards any part of your Family, as to render necessary any change in our Habits or intercourse, for I assure you and I make the assertion with every confidence of truth, that your Fathers Family cannot have a more faithful, or a more attached Friend, than I profess myself to be, and I hope on every occasion to approve Myself —*Walpole Collection* See letter to Tom Scott, 20th December, 1808—“General Stuart left Edinburgh last Sunday, Vol. VII, p. 424. In connexion with Tom’s financial affairs, Stuart’s present of £400 was included in Guthrie Wright’s remittances. See Vol. VII, p. 432

you are doing at home I have always a little vision of you sitting with all the monkeys teasing you and poor old Kiki sleeping upon the hearth rug If I do not find a letter from you on Wednesday I will be quite disappointed as I have not heard but once & that was before you had got any of mine You must have witnessd the melting of the power & glory of Picardy Place<sup>1</sup> which I suppose few people pitted it decayd like a snowball in June I wish however the Ministers may be able to go on without dissolving the parliament but I fear this is impossible—they are resolved however to try the experiment & not to dissolve if the House of Commons will allow them to carry on the business of the Country

I suppose by this time your gaieties are begun and that you have given a little fete in honour of the Change I assure you my card-rack is quite coverd with invitations from Secretaries of State and Cabinet Ministers all of which is extremely droll George Ellis is better & Colin Mackenzie has left London at last but not till he had done all that was imprudent in exposing himself to the most bitter easterly winds I ever felt I parted with him with a deep presentiment of evil & a most solemn though I fear fruitless recommendation to him to go abroad—if he does not—we shall never see him more—& such a blank in my domestic feelings & affections will never, never be filld up But I will hope the best and dismiss this subject which has greatly dampd my spirits

Tell me all about the Erskines, Skenes, Raes and whether Craig Gordon<sup>2</sup> is going to turn his coat again—also if you have seen Willie Clerk & how he stands his loss of conse-

<sup>1</sup> Apparently Scott refers to John Clerk, later Lord Eldon, in connexion with the fall of the Whig Government Clerk's residence was at No 16 Picardy Place, Edinburgh

<sup>2</sup> Probably he means James Gordon of Craig (1767-1832), another of his early friends in the Volunteer Cavalry See *Lockhart*, chap viii Craig was admitted advocate in 1790 See D Wimberley, *Memorials of Gordon of Craig* (1904), p 39 In *The Edinburgh Almanack* for 1807 William Clerk is given as one of the advocates depute on circuits



quence I wish to God he had got a sherifffdom before this change

Recommend me kindly to all freinds I wrote to Ballantyne & desired him to call and offer you what money you may want Kiss my little girls & boys and pray tell me how the schooling goes on The Laird I suppose is capering successfully<sup>1</sup> I hope he does not neglect his head for his heels, but I know you will be angry with me for the suspicion & I am<sup>7</sup> sure he will be the best boy in the world Do kiss them all for me and believe me your faithful

W S

PRIORY 30 *March* [PM 1807]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

ON BOARD HIS MAJESTIES YACHT MEDINA  
PORTSMOUTH HARBOUR 10 *April* [PM 1807]

You will perceive from the date my dear Love that I am safely quarterd for the night on board of our floating house, the accomodations of which are I assure you something very handsome Our cabbins are as large as your little drawing room & very smartly fitted up with every thing one can want Yesterday evening we went on board & this morning we came off Cowes, landed and visited Carisbrook Castle a spot beautiful in itself and rendered classical by its having been the place of Charles the first's long imprisonment The exterior of the castle is a beautiful gothic ruin & the entrance flanked by two stately towers is peculiarly striking—within is a chapel & a house for Lord Bolton<sup>2</sup> the Governor of the Island both modern In one corner of the walld enclosure is a round tower or Keep apparently very ancient & commanding a most delightful prospect The season is however too early to

<sup>1</sup> i.e. learning to dance

Thomas Orde, later Orde Powlett, first Baron Bolton He died on 30th July of this year

display that rich & delightful verdure for which the Isle of Wight is famous After visiting Carisbrook we returned to our Yacht & came here with a fresh breeze

We arrived here about two o'clock, eat our dinner on board (plenty of fowl-pye and madeira) & then went ashore to see the wonders of Portsmouth The Dock yards where the astonishing provisions for equipment of our navy are made ready & stored excited my surprise although my expectation was highly excited In particular the forging of the anchors formed a scene worthy of Louthembourg's<sup>1</sup> pencil The place was illuminated by the gloomy light of twenty furnaces & the red glare of the heated iron, a gang of fourteen smiths surrounded each anchor & battered it alternately with hammers of half an hundred weight each The sight of these ghastly spectres with the clang of so many hammers dinning at once reminded me of the poetical description of Vulcan forging the thunderbolts<sup>2</sup> Altogether it was very striking One thing displeased me which was the sight of the Convicts in their irons going up and down some part of the yards there is something very degrading in the idea of a freeborn Briton in chains and the brutal & sordid expression of countenance which these wretches exhibit is not calculated to recommend the exhibition Besides I should be afraid of their corrupting the workmen by their intercourse though that I suppose is prevented

Tomorrow we wait upon the Port Admiral<sup>3</sup> & expect to visit the fleet & some of the most remarkable vessells by his authority—when that is over we will weigh and return to Christ Church where we expect to be on Saturday morning Our little frigate has ten hands and is mounted with swivels so that we not only defy the winds & waves but could even resist a small privateer were there an

<sup>1</sup> Or Lutherburg, Philippe Jacques (1740-1812), the French painter

See Virgil, *Aeneid*, Book viii, lines 422-53

<sup>3</sup> Sir Isaac Coffin (1759-1839), rear admiral, who continued as superintendent at Portsmouth till he was promoted vice admiral in 1808 See next letter to Charlotte

instance of such freebooters coming within the Isle of Wight There is great alertness among the ships of war here—nothing stirs without being challenged stopd and examined—we as a Kings ship passd free of course I have not been in the least sick which I am rather surprized at—perhaps it is awaiting me

You see my dear Mimi that I lose no opportunity to communicate to you my voyages & discoveries—perhaps they are not very amusing but the scene is new to me & I am apt to think you should be diverted with every thing that gives me pleasure I hope this will find you and the little ones quite well & happy—pray run about & have people with you to amuse you of an evening Ballantyne writes he has paid you £15 When you want more do not hesitate to apply to him for it I intend to be in London on Monday or Tuesday next This is the night of the great debate in the house of Commons I fear Ministers will be in a Minority, in which case the Parliamt must be dissolved Believe me dear Mimi Ever your own

W S

As Mr Rose may remain in the country some days longer, you had better address your next under cover to Lord Dalkeith, Montagu house London

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAR MIMI,—Our return to Christ Church from Portsmouth was not quite so pleasant as the preceding part of the Voyage The wind & tide chose to disagree and as each was positive in insisting upon our going its way the little frigate rolld and pitchd most abominably Rose & Mansfield were both very sick, a misfortune which I escaped greatly to my own surprize But as the sea dashd over the vessell it was impossible to keep the deck & below it was equally impossible to keep ones feet or even to maintain his ground on a sofa So I went to

bed where I lay about three hours eating sea biscuit & cold fowl pour passer le temps As we saw our return to Roses Cottage<sup>1</sup> by sea was to be difficult we landed at the small village of Lymington & made a post chaise our conveyance for the rest of our journey

Yesterday we came here on horseback for Mr Rose has mounted me very well while I have been with him Today we made a long circuit through the forest and are just returnd In the evening I have orderd a chaise for Southampton & will make the best of my way from thence to town in one of the numerous coaches which leave it

You see I am a very good boy & give you a regular account of my motions I forgot to say that while we were at Portsmouth Sir Isaac Coffin the Port Admiral came & visited us on board our yacht & gave us his own barge to visit such of the ships of line at Spithead as we thought were worth going on board

In my next letter I hope to be able to say something about the time of my return to Edinburgh I am to go down to Wimbledown to spend a day with Lord Mellville where I hope to learn what is to be done in the business of the Bill I have general assurances that it will be accomodated with an eye to our own interest I understand by a letter from Ballantyne that Lord Armadale<sup>2</sup> is quite blown up at the Old Bank of Scotland which will be

<sup>1</sup> According to *Lockhart*, chap xvi, where lines from an unpublished poem, alluding to Scott's visit, are given in a footnote Rose's cottage was Gundimore, which is situated near Mudiford, in Hampshire, but in this letter Scott writes from Rose's father's house, Cuffinells, near Lyndhurst, Hants "The forest" is, of course, the New Forest For Scott's retrospect of this happy time with Rose see letter to Skene, 6th January 1813, Vol III p 214 "Mansfield" would seem to be the Captain Mansfield, an officer of the South Fencibles, a regiment raised by the Duke of Buccleuch, mentioned in Vol XI p 378 He may be Sir James Mansfield (1733-1821) or David William (1777-1840), third Earl of Mansfield

<sup>2</sup> Sir William Honyman, Bart (1756-1825), eldest son of Patrick Honyman of Graemsay, Orkney, took the title of Lord Armadale when he became a judge of the Court of Session At this period he was a Commissioner of the Justiciary Court Scott was entertained by his factor, Mr Rae and his wife, at Clestron, Orkney, in August 1814 See *Lockhart*, chap xxix, where the name is printed 'Clestrom'

a heavey blow to that party Mrs Gordon of Craig may reserve her lamentations over her dear country for the fate of her dear husband who is pretty well known here and will hardly gain any of the objects of his ambition without a new change of government The late victory of Ministers in the house of Commons (where they had a majority of 32) was so little expected that at the very moment of division Lord Howick<sup>1</sup> expressed himself absolutely certain of carrying the motion by a majority of 30—this was equal to mistaking sixty & upwards & shewd their plans were ill laid

I hope my own affairs will go well I believe the Ministers would pension off George Home but a late Act of Parliament does not leave that in their power I expect however to get something arranged upon this important affair before I leave town It is easy to imagine how anxious you will be to gain this great step As soon as I go to town I will look out for some little pretty matters for you but I would like to know what is most likely to be acceptable

I have been doing all I can to assist our freind Erskine in his views on the sheriffdom of Perth, & shall learn the result tomorrow If however he fail there he is I think certain to be provided for shortly

Adieu my dearest girl I often think on you & your little followers not forgetting old Kiki Dont forget to take great care of yourself and to seek out every way of amusing your widowhood & especially write to me often as I am very anxious about you all I beg you will get more money when you want it & do not stint yourself John Ballantyne will send you what you please Once more dear Mimi Good bye Yours truly

CUFFNELLS 14 April 1807

W SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> Charles Grey, Viscount Howick (1764 1845), the Whig minister, who as Foreign Secretary, resigned on the question of Catholic Emancipation William Erskine, now an advocate depute, afterwards became Sheriff of Orkney and Shetland

TO MRS SCOTT

LONDON 19<sup>th</sup> April [docketed 1807]

MY DEAREST LOVE,—I have received two of your kind letters since I came to London so that I am quite in your debt I have all the letters you have written but my wandering makes them arrive irregularly I have a letter from your Brother which I inclose You will be sorry for his wifes misfortune, which I suspect has occasioned a miscarriage He seems in excellent health himself & as for his pecuniary loss by the Madras Bankruptcy he is in a situation soon to redeem that disadvantage If his wife is forced to leave India it will be a grievance of a more serious kind as it will deprive him of that society which (to judge by my own feelings) is most necessary to domestic happiness

I grieve to say poor Marriots<sup>1</sup> health is so bad that he has been obliged to resign the charge of Lord Scotts education and go to Devonshire for the chance of recovering his health The circumstance is more painful as he was to have married Marv Scott in a few weeks & taken up house at Eaton where Lord Scott was to have been his boarder Now all is blown up & though the Buccleuch family will always continue his freinds yet in being forced to resign the charge of Lord Scott he loses that direct & obvious claim which would otherwise certainly have conducted him to the highest station in the Church It is a cruel case for me to have taken leave of two such men as Colin Mackenzie & Marriott under circumstances of such a painful nature & has affected me more than I am usually apt to give way to I am however convinced that this life is a scene of trial & that early death is in many instances a blessing rather than a misfortune How many people live to blast fair prospects & destroy brilliant character by misconduct & how many more are without any fault or

<sup>1</sup> For John Marriott, his tutorship of George Henry Lord Scott, and his subsequent career, see Vol IV, p 155 and note

even imprudence thrown by chance & calamity into situations so different from those they were formed to occupy that we scarcely acknowledge them to be the same people whom we have formerly known

To take a more pleasant subject I arrived here on Wednesday last after travelling all night with out experiencing the least inconvenience, that day I dined with Lord Abercorn who has taken a large house in James's Square I have breakfasted twice with the Marchioness who admits me to her boudoir—there's for you Yesterday I dined with Robt Dundas, the Chief Baron &c were there all in brilliant spirits with the change There is no doubt of its being lasting at least while the King lives, unless they are obliged to take in Lord Sidmouth commonly called *the Doctor* who has contrived to physic every administration without exception of which he has been a part The prince of Wales has renounced politics—he is terrified by the approach of death which by the best accounts is not far distant, his disease is a dropsy combined with a general decay of the system but this is only *whisperd* As to my own affair depend upon it I do not intend to place myself upon a footing of a precarious nature What is intended by government is that I shall ride the new Clerk as G Home rides me so that while [George] draws my salary I shall draw the salary of the new comer What turn the Bill will take is yet uncertain but we shall know in the beginning of this week It is probable I may be one of the Commissioners appointed to draw up a report to parliament on the Subject as two are to be taken from the Clerks

I am very glad Davids wife is doing well & that old Kiki has his regular exercise and appetite You do not say if his walking is mended & whether he is still Saddleback The dear little people will I am sure be attentive to you and to their schools I am anxious to know how little Annes cough does & if it is like to prove the hooping cough as you seem to think

As to Raes wishes I have not yet heard from him on the subject—if I do I will endeavour all in my power to place his case in the best point of view I suppose the present Sheriff will shortly be made a Baron of Exchequer<sup>1</sup> My motions are still uncertain Believe me my heart is with you & home Ever yours

W S

Mr Hunter the Bookseller leaves town on Tuesday I will send you by him two political caricature prints & the narrative mentiond in your Brothers letter

As our Selkirkshire member lives next door to me you had better send your letters inclosed to W Elliot Lockhart Esq M P Bury Street St James Londn

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAREST MIMI,—I delayd writing yesterday thinking I should be able to gather something with probability of what is likely to be done with this Bill but I find its fate will not be decided till tomorrow when I may be able to guess if I can leave town next week as I propose at present Meantime my time glides away or rather I should say is wasted among engagements My list for this week is as follows—Sunday with the Dumergues—Monday with Miss Wedderburnes Brother,<sup>2</sup> a very smart & fashionable young man married to a daughter of Lord Auckland Miss W sends you all manner of kind compliments & says her Mother writes that you are well & happy Tuesday I dined at Acton with Wolfe Murray & his new married lady She is a lively Brunette (like a little acquaintance of

<sup>1</sup> See letter to Lord Dalkeith, May 1808, with notes, pp 392 4

Andrew Colvile Wedderburn (1779 1836), son of James Wedderburn Colvile of Inveresk He married in 1806 as his second wife, the Hon Mary Louisa Eden, fifth daughter of William, first Lord Auckland Wolfe Murray had married, on 7th April 1807, Isabella Katherine, only daughter of James Charles Edward Stuart Strange (godson of Prince Charles Edward Stuart)



mine) talks a great deal & seems very good natured I dont know whether as foils to Madam Bride or upon what other principle but Murray & Miss Strange (the brides aunt) had assembled a pack of the ugliest old hags I ever beheld in my life Besides these stupid old cats there was a boring english politician with an infernal tenacity of memory stockd with dates & names which he pourd forth on us without mercy There was nothing pleasant except Mrs Murray & the wine which was superb—the rooms were floored with marble & deadly cold—& to conclude the whole a robbery was committed on the road as we returnd which made us travel in fear & trembling This day I dine with Ld Abercorn, Tom will be there & I fancy the Marquis designs to give him a lecture The said Marquis has taken prodigiously to my poetry & we are upon a footing of intimacy which his Lady says is very unusual with this great man Tomorrow I dine with Lady Douglas & go in the evening to Lady Abercorns great rout for which 800 tickets are issued Friday I dine at Lord Somervilles & go in the evening to Lady Castle-reaghs rout Saturday, I am to be down at the Princess's who has said all that is civil & kind of me & to me So there is a week disposed of in one way & another

Nickey has bought your tea & candles & I wait impatiently to know what kind of things I am to bring you for your own proper self Do let me know & dont be modest about it Nickey has been in attendance upon Mrs Turton for some time, it seems this old girl is dying & there is some hope of a legacy for our good friend as she is immensely wealthy But there is no trusting these old cats who will neither die as they ought to do when every body is tired of them nor take the pains to dispose of their substance properly when they are compelld to depart So I fear she will either cheat poor Nickey by recovery or by neglecting her in the will

I still keep my intention of coming down by the west road but shall send David by sea with all my baggage that

is not indispensable & so travel in Stage coaches at as little expence as possible Perhaps I may seduce Erskine to be my companion which would be delightful Of course I will go to Soho to see the Boltons,<sup>1</sup> & also the Wordsworths Wordsworth is now in town & breakfasted with me yesterday—tomorrow I return the compliment

Only think how happy I will be to find myself at my own fireside again the bairns playing about & my dear Mimi presiding over the game If we live that is a time which will shortly come round Meanwhile believe me your own

W S

5 BURY STREET *Wednesday* [22nd April 1807]

Continue to direct under cover to W E Lockhart Esq M P Bury Street & put a *wafer* into the outer cover because in putting on wax one is apt to glue the inclosed letter to the cover so that in opening the one you tear the other

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

SUNNINGHILL 27 April 1807

MY DEAREST MIMI,—I received your affectionate letter two days ago most wellcome as it assured me that all my little interest in Edinburgh continued well and that you are happy and amused As to money matters I trust them entirely to your own discretion and only beg you to consider your own wishes and convenience and I am sure they will meet mine

On Saturday I went to Blackheath where the Princess <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See Vol I, Introduction, p lx1 and note, pp 183 4 and note

<sup>2</sup> After a formal separation in 1796 from the Prince of Wales, Amelia Elizabeth Caroline of Brunswick, Princess of Wales, lived at Shrewsbury House, near Shooter's Hill In 1801 she removed to Montague House, Blackheath, and in 1806 there was instituted an enquiry into her conduct This was called "the delicate investigation" The other persons mentioned are Sir Vicary Gibbs (1751 1820), the judge, for John Hookham Frere see letter to Mrs Scott of Harden, 6th March 1832, and note, p 45

wellcomed me I may almost say with open arms & seemed indeed to be fully more happy to meet me than almost any freind I have seen in London though I have had a cordial reception from all She spoke of her situation with her usual frankness & of the verse in the Health to Lord Melville which she said had not been lost upon her<sup>1</sup> We were a small party, only Sir V Gibbs now the Solicitor General, John Frere, Lord & Lady Glenbervie & the Lady in waiting She is in admirable spirits but thinner a good deal I suppose owing to the worrying she has undergone As soon as she saw me she cried out "Come my dear Walter Scott & see all my improvements" & accordingly she whiskd me through her grotto & pavilion & conservatory & so forth asking me shily at the same time if I was not afraid to be alone with her The ornaments with which I was most struck were two statues of herself & her daughter in her saloon the former in the character of *Resignation* the latter in that of *Hope* the idea was very pretty and the figures like the originals The Princess will emerge from all her distresses she is to be at the Court on the Birthday & I think may soon look forward to a time when she will be enabled to gratify her freinds and make her enemies her footstool She would not allow me to depart without fixing a day for returning so I am to dine there on Wednesday She seems to blame Lord Lauderdale most for the persecution she has undergone & as you know his Lordship was pleased to busy himself in my matters you may rely upon it I did not miss the opportunity of doing him some good offices in my turn of which

Sylvester Douglas, Baron Glenbervie (1743-1823), married in 1789 the Hon Catherine Anne, eldest daughter of Lord North In 1820 Glenbervie was a witness for the defence in Queen Caroline's trial "Lord Lauderdale" is James Mantland, eighth Earl of Lauderdale (1759-1839)—see Vol VI, p 238 and note For the Princess's reception of Scott the previous year see letter to George Ellis, March 1806, p 281

<sup>1</sup> On Lord Melville's acquittal in June 1806 a public dinner was given in honour of the event in Edinburgh, for which Scott composed the song "Health to Lord Melville," sung by James Ballantyne For the tribute to the princess see the seventh stanza, Scott's *Poetical Works* (1833-34), pp 633-34 See also Vol I, pp 304-5, and *Lockhart*, chap xv

in due time he may reap the fruit People should be very cautious how they injure any one for the whirligigg of Time as sayeth Shakespeare is apt to bring opportunities of revenge which can be little calculated upon All this especially the latter circumstance is for your private ear After returning from Blackheath as I thought with myself I had no Mim<sup>i</sup> waiting for me I went to Lady Castle-reagh's<sup>1</sup> party after the Opera—this was at half past twelve There were none but “Lords & Dukes & noble Princes” Lady C is a fat goodhumoured laughter-loving Dame Among all these fine folks I have never happend to meet my ci-devant freind Lady Roslyn I am truly sorry for the dance they have led our freinds the Raes

Yesterday morning I set off on the top of the Windsor Coach between an old girl who gave us the history of her three husbands & her five apprentices & of her own

<sup>1</sup> Lady Emily Anne, youngest daughter and co heiress of John Hobart, second Earl of Buckinghamshire The reason for Scott's not meeting Lady Roslyn was apparently because his above mentioned song to Lord Melville had “created a marked coldness towards him on the part of the accomplished and amiable Countess of Rosslyn (a very intimate friend of his favourite patroness, Lady Dalkeith), which as his letters show, wounded his feelings severely,—the more so, I have no doubt, because a little reflection must have made him repent not a few of its allusions He was consoled, however, by abundant testimonies of Tory approbation”—*Lockhart*, chap xv See letter to Lady Dalkeith 14th August 1810, Vol II, pp 371 72—“Poor Lady Roslyn is gone with all the various talent and vivacity that rendered her society so delightful I regret her loss the more as she died without ever making up some unkindness she had towards me for these foolish politics, etc” See also note to letter to Thomas Thomson, 18th April 1805, p 381 In an undated letter, probably some time in 1806, Lady Roslyn had written “I certainly feel much flattered that you should have thought it worth while to have written to me upon the subject of what I said to Mr Rae, as I cannot think my opinion can be of any consequence to you I regret as much & perhaps more than you do, that any circumstance should [have] arisen to make a coolness between us, nor do I expect that the political sentiments of all my Friends should be the same as mine, as a proof of which I believe you will recollect that Politics was a topic upon which you & I never agreed, but in this particular instance, I cannot help feeling the song alluded to as an uncalled for mark of personal disrespect to Mr Fox The lesson he taught & practised during the course of his life was that of forgiveness of injuries, it is a lesson which much as I admire, I feel I cannot put in practice where he is concerned as he would have done I beg this subject which is unpleasant & even painful to me may not be renewed”—*Walpole Collection*

success in the tallow chandling line & a monster of blubber who must have weighd at least 20 stone & who assured me that the peas in his garden were at least two inches higher than any we saw upon the road, a circumstance which afforded him the more satisfaction as he said there was an uncommonly *early & forward crop* of ducklings & goslings in the ponds about Brentford. I thought within myself that my society was strangely varied within a few hours but what a convenient country it is where one may dine with the Pss of Wales, sup with the prime minister's lady & ride upon the outside of a stage to breakfast with a Tallow chandler without any body caring a farthing about the matter. Davids passage & mine only cost me seven shillings down to Windsor. I went to Chapel & saw the King which was my chief object in coming by Windsor instead of Staines. Young Robinson accompanied me so far on the journey. I then took a chaise through the Park & here I am. I had the pleasure to find Ellis in tolerable health and very good spirits—but his little Lady<sup>1</sup> is quite mortified at your not being of the party. Sunning Hill is looking beautiful, the ground whitend with daisies & for violets I send you a sample for which I expect a thousand pretty speeches because I know you love them so much. Ellis & his wife have Julia Parker her niece constantly residing with them. she is a sensible accomplished girl & very attentive to her uncles convenience & amusement. They talk of Scotland but for this summer I fear it is but talking as I don't see how it is possible for him to travel 400 miles without injury when he is heated & made feverish by the journey between Sunning Hill & town—still however talking of it seems to give Mrs E & him great pleasure. Mrs Ellis is extremely inquisitive about your garden & poultry yard and speaks of you without end.

<sup>1</sup> On 10th September 1800 George Ellis had married Anne, daughter of Sir Peter Parker, first baronet of Basingbourn. See notes in Vol I, pp 215, 222, and see *Journal*, 3rd January, 1828.

I leave this place tomorrow & hope to hear for certain what is to happen about the Bill I now think it will blow over till a new Parliament, for I suspect the Dissolution of the present is resolved upon in secret & so the public seem to be convinced If I can I will return here one day this week & pass another day with Ellis In inclosing letters for me pray don't go beyond the weight of an ounce otherwise they cost the Devil & all This you may know by weighing them against a penny piece

Ten thousand loves to the dear little boys & girls I expect to see Charles running races with the rest when I return which must now be very soon I rejoice to hear that the old black gentleman is in handsome enjoyment of his health Best love to my Mother & all freinds who have been kind Ever dear Mimi your own  
W S

I have not felt one touch of the bile this age I am glad the little colds are gone off After I come home I think if you approve of sending Peter to the Country that the horses may have the benefit of a few weeks grass Ellis & his Lady send a thousand kind compliments

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAREST LOVE,—This day finishes my London career of dissipation I think I hear you say *thank God for that* Tomorrow I take a quiet dinner with Millar & in the evening I go to the Inn from which the Coach starts—this is necessary as it starts at  $\frac{1}{2}$  past 4 morning I go in company with Wordsworth down to Loughborough<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> From November 1806 to June 1807 the Wordsworths were living at the farmhouse at Coleorton, lent them by Sir George Beaumont Scott had promised to visit them on his way to London, and Wordsworth had sent him minute instructions how to get to Coleorton “The coach would bring you to Loughborough, which is only eleven Chaise miles from us” Scott did not come on his way south, but Wordsworth being in town for a few weeks they arranged to travel together On April 28th Wordsworth wrote to De Quincey “The time of my leaving Town does not depend on myself but a gentleman who accompanies me to Leicestershire he hopes to attend

where I will halt one day with him to the best of my computation I will be home about Sunday or Monday I think of spending a day at Mainsforth<sup>1</sup> but not unless I can spare it easily

I have had a discussion with Robert Dundas on the subject of George Home, & now understand old Johnie Pringle is to [be] promoted I stated to him my wish & hope that whoever succeeded him should take George Home off my hands which he seemd highly to approve & recommended me to come to an explanation with his father so soon as the Election matters are a little slackend I consider the matter as not being settled but in the fairest train possible L[d] Dalkeith makes it quite his own concern & is too powerful to be trifled with even if Ld Mellville was disposed to do so as I am convinced he is not and ought not to be

I am in such a hurry of taking leave &c &c that I have only time to say that David saild yesterday with all my heavy baggage & that I am rejoiced at getting out of this bustle and doubly rejoiced at the hopes of hugging you and the children this day week The cap which David brings was chosen for you by Lady Abercorn out of a great number & is the model of one bought at the same time by Lady Aberdeen one of the most beautiful & fashionable women about town So I hope it will give satisfaction Once more adieu ' my sweet Mim! Your Ever

WALTER SCOTT

LONDON 4th May [PM 1807]

I have written to Rae that he should not think of engaging himself in Lanarkshire as I see a very strong probability of his succeeding in his object of the Sherifdom of Edinr & that very soon I hope the Roslyns will not drive the pigs through this business as formerly

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

me on Tuesday next" It was on this occasion that they made the visit to the Swan of Lichfield, or the Wordsworths thought they did but Scott denied it See Vol IX, pp 128 and note, 129

<sup>1</sup> The residence of Robert Surtees

LETTERS TO HIS WIFE, WRITTEN ON THE  
TOUR IN THE LIGHT-HOUSE YACHT

1814

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TO MRS SCOTT, ABBOTSFORD, BY MELROSE, EDINR

[Extract]

ABE[R]BROTHICK<sup>1</sup> 30 July [1814] 4 o'clock

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—Though it be but yesterday since we parted, yet my opportunities of writing being few & uncertain I will not omit the present We ran down the Firth with a fine gale & landed on the Isle of May which the Commissioners of the Northern lights have just purchased for the sum of £60,000 & upwards including a revenue arising from a tax laid upon the Shipping who come up the Firth In proceeding from thence round the extreme point of Fife we had a touch of a deep rolling pitching kind of a heezie hozie as the children call it which forced the most reluctant and stout of the party to restore to Neptune our coffee & toast I turnd in about eleven & slept most comfortably in my crib Next morning we were near the Bell-rock light-house & went there to breakfast

<sup>1</sup> Or, in modern form, Arbroath, on the south east coast of Forfarshire It is the 'Fairport' of *The Antiquary* In the omitted portion of the letter Scott goes into minute details about the Bell Rock Lighthouse, for a full account of which see R. Stevenson, *An Account of the Bell Rock Light House* (1824), and D. Stevenson, *Life of Robert Stevenson* (1878), p. 265 "The Shetland parson" is John Turnbull (*b* Ancrum, 1775, *d* 1867), minister of Tingwall, Shetland (see Hew Scott, *Fasti Ecclesiæ Scotticæ*, vii, p. 292), where, on 7th August of this year, Scott breakfasted at the manse See *Lockhart*, chap. xxviii



We were treated with some very rough waves in coming from the rock to this town where we dine on terra firma—all *sick* again—Stevenson the surveyor who is constantly on the sea did not escape—the Shetland parson was almost dead For my part I care very little about it for I am just sick for five minutes & there is an end of the matter—I feel neither headache nor diminution of spirits but some of our companions are deplorable enough & John<sup>1</sup> is totally useless—sick to a degree of misery and liker a half drown'd baboon than any thing else Erskines David Ditto—Erskine himself bears up bravely As to Hamilton he has been in bed all day & to day was carried in triumphantly in a post chaise We are here to visit the light-house establishment & dine on shore We go to our cabbins on board & sail at one in the morning for God knows whither Aberdeen I believe or Peterhead The vessell is most commodious admirably mand fitted up and commanded & has six guns so there is no fear of winds waves or even Yankees This will find you at Dear Abbe Kiss all the brats for me I have brought them some buckie shells from the rock Tell Sophia & Anne to sing the “Boaties rows” for me Kind compliments to [the] Misses Russells & do not omit to give my greeting to fifi & puss Yours ever

W SCOTT

Be assured I follow your prescription & stuff manfully & I assure you I have been a thousand times sicker with one senseless fit of bile than with all this tossing

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

[Extract]

NORTHERN LIGHTS YACHT OFF ABERDEEN

31 *July* [PM 1814] 11 o'clock

DEAR CHARLOTTE,—According to my plan I write a few lines now & then & trust to chance for getting my

<sup>1</sup> Scott's man servant

letter to a post office We got on board last night and were join'd by Adam Duff<sup>1</sup> I was sound asleep long before the vessell saild nor was my rest disturbd by her getting under way At seven this morning when I rose I found we were gliding along with a gentle & favourable wind and most delightful weather under the old castle of Dunnottar belonging to our freind Mr Keith of Ravelstone The ruins lookd very well from the sea—after this we passd the town of Stonehaven & had a distant peep of Fetteresso the seat of Colonel Duff<sup>2</sup> brother of our freind Mrs Baron Clerk & of Adam Duff—it seems a handsome place and well wooded We have now reachd the harbour of Aberdeen but it is no part of our plan to visit that town or to enter the port Messrs Erskine & Duff & Mr Stevenson are gone ashore to look at a small projecting rocky cape called Girdleness where there is some plan for a light house<sup>3</sup> I am informd the Oscar Greenland man was lost last year just where we are lying and all hands 40 in number perishd except two The sea must have presented a very different scene then from what it does at present I am writing upon deck like a prince under an awning The towns of New Aberdeen & Old Aberdeen are both under my eye—the last is a small place but

<sup>1</sup> Sheriff of Kincardineshire, a Commissioner

<sup>2</sup> Robert William Duff (1767-1834) of Fetteresso and Culter, Lieut Col Forfarshire Militia His sister Jane married in 1791 James Clerk of Chesterhall

<sup>3</sup> On 1st April, 1813, when leaving the south side of Aberdeen harbour, the whaler *Oscar* was driven by a gale on to the rocks and wrecked The first mate and a seaman were the only survivors Shortly after, the Aberdeen magistrates petitioned the Northern Lighthouse Commissioners to erect a lighthouse near this point, or ness, named from a submerged rock known as "the Girdle" Though the Commissioners on their 1814 cruise examined the proposed site of the lighthouse, they did nothing in the matter till 1828, when they remitted to Robert Stevenson to report on the new memorial that had been received from the Aberdeen shippers In 1830 instructions were given to erect the lighthouse, and in July 1831 the foundation stone was laid by Provost Hadden of Aberdeen On 15th October, 1833, the Girdleness light was first put into action See *The Lone Shieling, etc* (1908, p 87), by G M Fraser, Public Library, Aberdeen, to whom we are indebted for the particulars in this note

distinguishd by several steeples and towers belonging to the college which is there situated New Aberdeen is a very large & handsome town & has some pretension to be call'd a city Nobody has been sick today Hamilton is on deck and quite chirruping I believe his voyage will suit him very well Marjoribanks is a goodhumour'd boy and does not annoy us—so I am as well as you can wish me—above all I am pleased with Mr Stevenson<sup>1</sup> the Surveyor who joins much gentleness and an extreme degree of attention to a vast fund of extensive information

1st July [August] LIGHT HOUSE YACHT  
OFF FRASERBURGH

You have hitherto escaped without any winders but you must not expect to be so fortunate in future—people are not to be coop'd up like chickens and sick and wet & so forth without the privilege of telling their marvellous adventures You must know that after leaving our station off Aberdeen we ran on along a sandy coast untill we came to Slains Castle the hereditary seat of the Earls of Errol High Constables of Scotland They had once an immense estate here—it is now dwindled to the mansion house & a farm or two The House is an old mean-looking range of buildings forming a square but it is remarkably situated on the very verge of the precipice which over-hangs the sea It would be difficult if not impossible to walk between the wall of the house & the brink of the precipice & the windows look out upon the German Ocean The sight of a storm in such a mansion must be truly awful<sup>2</sup> As Mr Marjks proposed inclosing this to his father I send a sprig of heath pull'd from the top of the precipice

<sup>1</sup> For Robert Stevenson, the engineer, see Vol IV, p 110 and note, and D Stevenson, *op cit passim* "Marjoribanks" is David, son of Sir John Marjoribanks of Lees, Bart, Lord Provost of Edinburgh, 1813 15

<sup>2</sup> Here Scott describes the visit to the Bulls of Buchan, which largely coincides with what Lockhart quotes from the Diary in the *Life*, chap xxviii

& a piece of tangle gatherd at the bottom The one is for Sophia the other for Anne You may read these descriptions to the children & pray keep my letters as I shall be a good journalist We got on board about  $\frac{1}{2}$  past six after a glorious day I find I shall not be sick unless in very severe weather There fell a very heavy haze just when we came on board Had it come sooner the Yacht must have fired minute guns otherwise we should never have found her out "How little do the landsmen know?"

Our mode of life is very regular We breakfast largely—lunch at one or two & dine at six After dinner tea & coffee & a sandwich at ten for those who like it This morning we found ourselves off Frasersburgh where there is a beacon to be examined I shall not go ashore as it is rainy & nothing to be seen Kiss the children—comp to [the] Miss Rs & forget not fi & puss The pilot is to take this ashore So soon as they come on board we bear away for Shetland the wind is excellent

W S

I find the sea-weed is lost so the heath must be divided I wish you had some of the excellent Finnon haddocks<sup>1</sup> we bought at the Bullers & are just going to eat for breakfast Tell Sophia I past Logie of Buchan yesterday A whole

<sup>1</sup> It will be recalled that when, in August 1773, Boswell and Dr Johnson breakfasted at Cullen, they were given "dried haddocks" to eat "Dr Johnson was disgusted by the sight of them, so they were removed" To which, in Croker's *Boswell's Johnson* (1831), II, p. 343, Scott supplies this footnote A protest may be entered on the part of most Scotsmen against the doctor's taste in this particular A Finnon haddock dried over the smoke of the sea weed, and sprinkled with salt water during the process, acquires a relish of a very peculiar and delicate flavour, inimitable on any other coast than that of Aberdeenshire, etc" The "parish" Scott mentions was that of Forvie (now part of the Parish of Slains), which, with its church and village, was overwhelmed by a sandstorm, lasting for nine days, in the fifteenth century This great sandy waste lies immediately north of the River Ythan, about thirteen miles north of Aberdeen Mr G M Fraser of Aberdeen has located the Forvie church, buried in the drifted sand See Rev J B Pratt, *Buchan* (second ed 1859), pp. 23-25, where a writer in *The Aberdeen Magazine* (May 1832) is quoted—"The scene was more in accordance with the desolation of an African wilderness loneliness and desolation which the traveller may be supposed to experience in the vast desert of Zahara, and where also see Appendix E, p. 326

parish thereabout was blown up and ruind by shifting sand  
as in the deserts of Arabia it is now a total waste

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

[Extract]

LIGHT-HOUSE YACHT AT SEA

3d August [PM 1814]

SINCE I wrote you from Fraserburgh my dearest Charlotte our journal has been almost a blank on the morning of the 1st we bore away from Fraserburgh with a fine breeze and talkd of reaching Shetland or the Fair Isle<sup>1</sup> at least (where the tyrant resides) that evening or next morning But we were finely bit—first there came a calm which lasted till evening—then contrary and baffling winds—then we were caught in very strong tides all of which embarassd our voyage We have seen nothing these three days but sea and sky and no one knows exactly where we are Shetland we must have passd but upon which hand seems uncertain Last night was a very rough one indeed Whenever my eyes closed I was awakend with a bump against the side of the ship & had nothing for it but making fun with the Counsellor The waves went fairly over the deck What navigation these seas must afford in winter time must be dreadful for even just now when the strong twilight lasts during the whole night the seamen dont think it safe to hold on their course through the night At all events we are quite safe by their caution and piquet backgammon chess shooting sea-fowl and fishing for mackarel put off the day with the help of eating drinking and being occasionally squeamish—*two o'clock*—They have just calld out *land* from the topmast head but whether it is She[t]land, Norway, or the Faroe Isles, seems altogether uncertain

<sup>1</sup> Fair Isle is 29 miles S S W of Sumburgh Head, and nearly midway between Shetland and Orkney "The tyrant" is Mr Strong, who was then tacksman, or lessee, of it See next letter to Charlotte

HARBOUR OF LERWICK 4<sup>th</sup> Augt

Here we are snug—the land seen from the topmast proved to be Brassa-head a cape or point of projecting rock which covers the harbour of Lerwick

LERWICK 6<sup>th</sup> August

These two last days have been spent in seeing what is remarkable about Lerwick. The country is more waste & barren than you could possibly conceive.<sup>1</sup> But it is to the sea & not the land that the Zetlander looks for wealth. There are fourteen sail of Greenland men large vessels just now lying in the harbour. They have beside admirable fishing upon their coast for the tusk & ling of which the hard fish is made which we eat joyously with mustard & butter. I have seen one or two Pictish castles built by a people who neither knew the use of mortar, of the arch or of a stair yet contrived to erect houses of great solidity and considerable height. But I despair to describe these singular mansions. Huge precipices and stormy capes and headlands surround this melancholy country<sup>2</sup> and it is so constantly indented by the inlets of the sea & by freshwater lochs here call'd Voes<sup>3</sup> that though the Main land of Zetland be 30 miles in length no part of it is two miles distant from the sea. The gentry are very well bred kind & hospitable we have their ponies at command if we wish to ride their boats if we wish to sail & their houses when we wish to rest ourselves. Our Surveyor Mr Stevenson has gone with our yacht to survey

<sup>1</sup> Then follow details of land holdings and fishing of no special interest

“ Or where the *Northern* ocean, in vast whirls,  
Boils round the naked, melancholy isles  
Of farthest *Thule*, and th *Atlantic* surge  
Pours in among the stormy *Hebrides*

—JAMES THOMSON, *The Seasons* Autumn  
(1735), lines 806-9

<sup>3</sup> But voes are salt-water lochs like fiords. Noss is one of the islands forming Bressay parish, Shetland. On its S.E. side lies an islet called the Holm of Noss, which used to be reached by a wooden cradle swung on ropes. See J. R. Tudor, *The Orkneys and Shetland, etc.* (1883), pp. 456-9

some islands to the Northwd but returns tomorrow & I hope we shall sail for the Orkneys on monday where I trust to find a letter to let me know what is going on at Abb meanwhile I must please myself with trusting that you are well & happy the children attentive to their lessons and all getting on as I would wish You may tell Walter Dougals relations look very shabby indeed I have only seen one real good poney on the island as yet—they do not attend to the breed which is degenerating fast Love to Sophia Anne and little Charles Ever most truly Yours

WALTER SCOTT

We are just calld to go to see a curious place calld the cradle of Noss

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

KIRKWALL/ORKNEY ISLANDS 13 Augt 1814

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—Here we are and W Erskine & I equally disappointed at not hearing from our better halves though Hamilton and Marjoribanks have letters Ours are probably with next post & we will take measures to have an express bring them across this island to Stromness as we leave Kirkwall tonight—at least sleep on board and will be at Stromness on Monday when the post comes in here Meantime it is a cruel disappointment but such must occur where winds waves & cross posts are concernd I wrote you from Aberbrothock & Fraserburgh also from Lerwick the Capital of Shetland but as there are no direct posts the last letter may be long of arriving We visited all that was remarkable in the main isle particularly a pretty place calld Scalloway belonging to a Gentleman of the name of Scott<sup>1</sup> The ladies have sent a parcel of

<sup>1</sup>John Scott of Scalloway (1756 1833) He had five daughters, the second of whom, Catherine, married in 1810 her cousin, James Scott, surgeon, H M S *Euryalus*, second son of John Scott of Melby (1760 1850) See F J Grant, *The County Families of the Zetland Islands* (1893), pp 232, 239 For James see Vol XI, p 265 and note 1

small shells India beans (which [were] driven ashore there from the west Indies) & other trinkets to their young cousins as they calld my *chulder* So you may tell the children I have come to the place where they buy curiosities for nothing We were quite loaded with kindness After this we left Shetland and had some very rough seas which turnd the landsmens stomach[s] topsy turvy I promise you I am a good seaman & can stand any thing short of a hard breeze contending with a Shetland *Rost*<sup>1</sup> which you must know is neither roast nor boild but a most ferocious tide as swift as a race-horse which makes you account for both I am told the celebrated Race of Portland is nothing to the tides of these seas & how the natives go forty miles from land in their open fishing boats with scarce a whole plank in them and about the length & breadth of the Abbotsford dining tables baffles my comprehension But I suppose they are the best & hardest boat-men in the world In our way from Shetland to Orkney we visited the Fair Isle where the supposed tyrant resides who is no more a tyrant than I am but exceedingly kind to his people & much beloved by them They all told us separately & voluntarily of his goodness to them & blessd God that he had come there If not a tyrant however he is a prince and reigns with almost absolute sovereignty over 250 souls His palace is not much better than Tom Purdies house & far from barring his door every night he hardly has a door to bar We dined with him sending our own dinner (which I *promise* you is always an excellent one) ashore to help his commons We walkd all over the island which is a curious assemblage of the most stupendous precipices These the natives climb with wonderful agility I was desirous to see a specimen of their skill but found Mr Strong or as they call him the Master discouraged the practice as they often lose their lives A fine boy of 15 had perishd about a fortnight or three weeks ago—his feet slipd upon a crag

<sup>1</sup> Generally now pronounced "roost"



300 feet high he fell into the ocean below & was never seen more. But the people attach a sort of honor to this death as we do to that of a soldier in battle and the boys mother was rather comforted by the idea that he had died in this way. The women knit stockings & queer kind of night-caps and mits. I have bought some but [they] must be well scoured for of all the dirt I ever saw that of the Fair Isle is transcendant. We left the isle amid the acclamations & cheers of the inhabitants who had never seen so many strangers in their life and seemd quite captivated with us. The Master hoisted all his flags at the signal post and not to be outdone we gave him & the islanders a salute of three great guns & so departed from his solitary dominions. I shall have much to tell you of this curious place. The day before yesterday we might have seen 250 whales lying upon the beach of Tressness<sup>1</sup> bay but the wind did not serve to go in—we saw the people *flunching* that is cutting them to pieces—this shoal of monsters were all destroyed by seven boats which chased them on shore a few days ago. A similar shoal was taken a week since on one of the Northern isles of Shetland M[r] Stevenson saw them. We have frequently these unwieldy gentlemen gambolling & spouting up sheets of water about our cutter but those we have seen are of an ill-natured kind & dont like at all to be killd so we dont meddle with them. If I dont get a letter from you on Monday I can have none till I come to Torloisk which is very tantalizing as I am by no means sure of the time the voyage round Cape Wrath will occupy. I trust in God you are all well. I never was better in my life. The most useful thing I brought to sea with me was the umbrella—the most useless poor John. He has been quite intolerable & last night was so drunk that I told him this morning I must look for another servant at Martinmas—he is much dejected but it is really impossible to put up with drunkenness added to folly & I can safely say he has not been one day sober to an end since we set out & I have

<sup>1</sup> Or Tres Ness, a headland on the E coast of Sanday, Orkney

spoke till I am weary His exploits would fill a volume but let them rest till we meet Meanwhile you may enquire about a successor to him I wish I could get some little place for the poor man

So soon as you receive this letter I wish you would write without an hours delay addressing to the care of Col Macneil<sup>1</sup>—Carskey—Campbelltown—do not put this off as I am truly anxious to know that you are all well I presume you have already written to the care of Mrs Maclean Clephane if not do not use that direction after this letter reaches you as there will not be time to write I believe we will be back in the 1st week of Septembr but it is very difficult to calculate when wind & tide enter into the accompt Kiss all [the] children I trust they are good & attentive Best compliments to [the] Miss Russells I hope Fifi & Puss are both well Yours most affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

There are some antiquities here to be lookd at but otherwise the Orkney Islands are far less interesting than those of Shetland I will write by the very first opportunity but that may be distant

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

DUNVEGAN CASTLE ISLE OF SKY[E]

24 August 1814

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—Here we are safe well and happy in all respects excepting that I have missd your letters and consequently have only to hope that all is well at home Erskine who staid two days after us at Kirkwall got his own letters but none for poor me which would have given me a fit of the bile only that all my bile has been long since consigd to the ocean We came round Cape Wrath

<sup>1</sup> See Vol III, p 486 and note

the extreme point of Scotland to the North west It is not ill named for such wrathful seas as rage upon that most desolate & rocky shore remind one of Robinson Crusoe But we were too well equipd in every respect to think of danger and always contrived to get ashore to see whatever was worth seeing We particularly explored a most extraordinary cave calld Smowe<sup>1</sup> the description of which would be too long in this letter—partly by land partly by water we got to its extremity which was a most awful & terrific spot It required five or six of our sailors to carry a boat into this cave over the most extraordinary subterraneous rocks you ever saw Yesterday we came into this lake<sup>2</sup> beneath the Castle of Macleod of Macleod whose reception has been most hospitable although I was the only person of our party known to him You remember his dining in Castle Street with Irish Johnson He came off with his piper in Highland costume & not to be behind-hand in etiquette we saluted his castle with three guns It is a very striking building overhanging the salt water lake in which our little sloop is lying with her colours spread & seen from the height of the Castle she looks just like a pretty toy Part of the Castle is very ancient & the walls of a tremendous thickness Mrs Macleod and Miss Macleod are very pretty & accomplishd women which are articles I have not seen since we left Edinr Tell the children I have just slept in a haunted chamber<sup>3</sup> & have had my rest strangely broken—not by goblins however but by the feather-bed being placed uppermost which does

<sup>1</sup> The Cave of Smowe, or Smoo, in Durness parish, Sutherland

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Dunvegan Loch, also known as Loch Follart, or, as in Scott's Diary of the voyage, 'Loch of Follart' 'Macleod of Macleod' is John Norman Macleod (1788-1835), the twenty first chief In 1809 he had married Anne, daughter of John Stephenson of Merstham, Kent See Vol VII, p 213 and note 2, and letter to Lady Macleod, 3rd March, 1815, Vol IV, p 38 "Miss Macleod" is one of the chief's sisters, either Sarah, who married Robert Pringle of Stutchill, or Anne Eliza, who married Spencer Perceval, eldest son of the Prime Minister

<sup>3</sup> For a recollection, early in 1828, of this haunted chamber see Vol X, p 372, see also *Letters on Demonology*, pp 386-89

not agree with my constitution Macleod is adding to his castle in very good taste and making a new entrance over a drawbridge There was formerly no mode of access but by stairs up from the sea cut through the solid rock not very convenient Here is preserved the horn of Rorie More that is Roderick the Great who used to quaff off its contents at a single draught It holds about three English pints We leave Dunvegan today in spite of the most earnest entreaties that we should remain & indeed Macleod wishd us to travel by land through Skie & proposed to accompany us he pressd me in particular very much but there is always risque of delay in losing sight of the vessell & I begin to look anxiously homeward I trust I shall find letters at Torloisk or Campbelltown or both I think if we have not cross winds we shall be at Greenock (near Glasgow) the first week of Septr and I beg on receiving this you will write to me directing "*Greenock To remain till calld for*" I will write the instant I come ashore & I hope you will be ready to start for Edinr on very short notice one day early in September when we will have the pleasure to meet and you shall hear all my strange fortunes by sea and land Mr Hamilton has got quite stout and we have been in all respects a delightful party and have got quite the better of all sea-sickness The weather has not been good nor temperate but it might have been much worse for we always got about in defiance of wind & rain. You must expect me to look very brown My hands are quite the colour of Yorke tan. This is the first post I have found since we left Orkney so you see I am an excellent correspondent Your letters if you wrote will be sent back from Kirkwall of course you will take care of them till we meet I hope the Brats are all well and behaving well Kiss them all for me & make my best Compliments to [the] Miss Russells If I had but heard from you I should have nothing to wish for on this expedition Yours my dearest Charlotte most affectionately

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

WALTER SCOTT

TO MRS SCOTT

LIGHT HOUSE YACHT OFF DUNSTAFFNAGE  
NEAR OBAN 1st *Sept* 1814

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—Since I wrote to you at Dunvegan Castle we have visited Staffa and Iona at some length and passd (i.e. Erskine & I) one day at Mrs Clephanes<sup>1</sup> where I found no letters from you which I fully expected I suppose I shall for certain find them at Campbelltown unless you have given me up all together Our present plan is instead of pursuing our course along the coast of Scotland to stand over for Ireland & visit the Giants causeway As the wind is favourable this will not prolong our voyage above two or three days I think we shall be at Greenock upon the 10th or 12th at the very farthest wind & weather serving The weather has been of late quite delightfull & the seas smooth which was very far from being the case in the earlier part of our voyage when we had rain wind and tossing enough and to spare We are all quite well and happy and much pleased with our expedition having seen a great deal of what is curious & interesting both upon the coast and in the islands and having met with many adventures which I have faithfully recorded in my journal for evenings entertainments at home I am now looking anxiously to Abbotsford but of course I will write the instant I come to Greenock & you may be in Edinburgh as soon as I Mrs Clephane pressd us much to stay dinner but we resisted manfully being determined to accept no invitations that can delay our voyage We are now quite hardy seamen and the word of

<sup>1</sup>In a letter from "Torloisk [Mull] Sept. [1814]" one of the Miss Clephanes writes "Your visit though so short a one my dear Sir has done us more good & given us more pleasure than I thought it possible for a few hours to occasion even when spent in your society, & however painful at the moment it was to lose you & Mr Erskine so soon, the feeling when you was out of sight more resembled the impression left by [an] agreeable dream than the miserable blank that friends departed leave behind them" She sends two or three original poetic pieces along with two Island stories — *MS 865, Nat Lib Scot*

sickness has not been heard among us for a fortnight We live on biscuit & salt-beef except when we can get fowls ashore soft bread is out of [the] question I often ask myself what you are all doing & what can be the meaning of my having no letters either at Kirkwall or Torloisk but I suppose somebody would have written had any thing been otherwise than well and I know the posts are so awkward & so cross where seas & ferries are concerned that I think your letters might easily miscarry At all events if you have had my letter from Kirkwall you will have written by Campbelltown—& if you have my Dunvegan Letter you will then write to Greenock where I shall find your letter on my landing If on receiving this letter before the 9th you address *immediately* a few lines to me Post Office Greenock to remain till call'd for & send them up to Selkirk I shall have the letter at landing—but if the letter reaches you after the 9th I think you need not write I have picked up much that is pleasant & interesting & much for my own purpose <sup>1</sup> Kiss all the brats for me most kindly remember my love to the Miss Russells I subjoin an order for £20 in case you are short of cash You can send it through to Mr Craig I suppose the shearing will be on & Tom Purdie very busy Yours most affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—I received with great satisfaction the news that you were all well at home by your letter of the 20th of August which I got this morning I have great need of some good news to raise my spirits a little after the deplorable intelligence of the death of our excellent friend <sup>2</sup> I leard this most distressing incident

<sup>1</sup> *i.e.* material for *The Pirate*

<sup>2</sup> Scott heard of the Duchess of Buccleuch's death at Dr Richardson's house at Portrush See Vol III, pp 488 93

by mere accident at a gentlemans house in Ireland where we were to see the celebrated Giants Causeway I was in consequence much distressd & more bilious than I had conceived was possible after being so long at sea but I am quite well again today This bad news greatly adds to my eagerness to be at home & have my thoughts a little to myself & as we have news of an American being off the coast I believe we will be at Greenock or Ayr tomorrow & as I shall make no stay as you may easily believe I hope God willing to be in Castle Street on the 10th so you can take your measures accordingly when this reaches you—fortunately we shall be in Campbelltown today where there is a Post House I will get this letter ashore I doubt you will scarce be able to read this for it is blowing very hard and every thing rolling about but this I am now so well used to that I can shave myself while the ship pitches so much that I must hold myself fast with one hand and use my razor with the other This is an awkward thing to have Americans cruizing so near us and as we are now out of danger of them I may tell in your ear that we have more than once shotted our guns and prepared for fighting I am sorry the Miss Russells are disappointed but I think that James has decided for the very best—a second parting is an awkward thing and throws him back in his profession besides Kiss all the brats for me I am quite rejoiced to hear they are good children and give you satisfaction in my absence I wrote from Oban inclosing a cheque for £20 which my absence may have renderd necessary & I then said I should be at Greenock upon the 10th or 12th but you see I am better than my word I am uncertain of the course of post from Campbellto[w]n but I suppose you will get this in time to be in Edinburgh upon the 11th or 12th My jaunt has compleatly answerd my purpose in every respect and has only been embitterd by this melancholy news at the conclusion The Duke is more to be pitied than any human being living and the blow to the family is altogether irretrievable

You need not be anxious about the letters sent to Mr Ker—they will be safe of course as I left directions to return them to Edinburgh Best compliments to the Miss Russells & love once more to the children Ever Yours most faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

6th *Sept*r [PM 1814] LIGHT-HOUSE YACHT  
OFF THE MULL OF KINTYRE

Postscript 7th August [September] The day was so stormy yesterday that we could not land a boat at Campbellto[w]n This has been a quiet day almost a calm but we have got within the firth of Clyde & cannot I think fail to be at Greenock tomorrow morning

*Second postscript* 8th August [September] Here we are about to land within two miles of Greenock I shall send this letter off to the Post Office, be in Glasgow tonight and in Castle Street tomorrow I reckon this letter will reach you on Saturday morning so that I may expect you in town (to my infinite joy) on Sunday or Monday at the very farthest I will have a bit of dinner ready for you on Sunday and wait till five o' clock We were much nearer the American frigate than is comfortable to think of

[*Nat Lib Scot*]



LETTERS TO HIS WIFE FROM BELGIUM  
AND FRANCE

1815



TO MRS SCOTT, ABBOTSFORD, NEAR MELROSE,  
N BRITAIN

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—Here we<sup>1</sup> are upon the immediate point of embarkation & while the Custom house people are searching our baggage I take the opportunity to write a few lines We passd thro Cambridge where we stayd a day to see the university which had like to have

<sup>1</sup> : e John Scott of Gala, Alexander Pringle the younger of Whytbank, and Robert Bruce, the advocate, who set out with Scott on Friday, 28th July They travelled in the stage coach by Soutra Hill, Lauder, Earlston, Branxton, Flodden, and reached Newcastle that evening Next day they proceeded to York On the way Scott was engaged in reading John Scott's *Visit to Paris in 1814* (1815) They attended service in the Minster, and arrived in the afternoon at Hull, where they were informed that, in order to get to Holland, they would need to continue as far as Harwich From Hull they ferried over to Barton, and by the night of the 31st arrived at Lincoln On 1st August they got to Peterborough, where they attended a service in the Cathedral, and went on to Cambridge, where they stopped all night, as Gala and Pringle, former students of the University wished to show the Colleges to Scott They lodged at "The Sun," opposite Trinity College, with which Scott was greatly pleased, and visited St John's and King's Chapel On the 2nd they continued their journey by Bury St Edmunds, inspecting the Abbey, and Ipswich, reaching Harwich late that night The vessel to Holland made little headway during the night, and they did not arrive at Helvoet till the morning of 5th August The sea had upset them The original MS (*MS 991*) of Robert Bruce's 'Journal of a Tour to the Continent in Autumn 1815, etc' was presented in May 1934 by A Francis Steuart, Esq, Advocate, to the Nat Lib Scot It extends from 28th July to 23rd August, 1815 With it is a passport, dated 19th July, 1815, and signed by Castlereagh, a letter from Bruce at Brussels, 9th August, to his father George Bruce, and an article and letter of the donor For another account see John Scott of Gala, *Journal of a Tour to Waterloo and Paris, etc in 1815* (1842)

cost us dear for the packet saild from Harwich yesterday before we came up which had almost delayd us till Saturday But we have got a nice little cutter as you ever saw to land us at Helvoet It sails in about ten minutes & we have it all to ourselves which is very snug I hope to be in Holland tomorrow & so "My native Land Goodnight"

I have no letter from you but have left direction should any arrive to send it to Brussels & I hope they will be attentive Kiss all the babies for me and assure them wherever I go my heart always turns <sup>1</sup> to them and you I trust they will be very attentive to my instructions about their learning and particularly obedient to you during my absence And in short I must comfort myself during my absence with hoping you are all as well as I wish you Believe me ever most affectionately Yours

WALTER SCOTT

HARWICH CUSTOM HOUSE

3 August 1815

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

BRUSSELS HOTEL DE FLANDRES 8th Augt 1815

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—I had your kind letter with the inclosures on my arrival at this town (I should say *city* by rights & it well deserves the name) yesterday You have my letters from Harwich & if Marshal MacDonalds letter is to be found you will probably forward it to Paris Every thing has gone quite well with us except that we were all very sick at sea Bruce & Pringle severely so We landed at Helvoet on Saturday morning & came that night to Bergen op Zoom a very strongly fortified town <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "We sailed in a treckschuyt up the Maes and arrived at Williamstadt shortly after midday [of the 5th] There we hired a cabriolet, and proceeded to Bergen op zoom"—Scott of Gala, *Journal, etc*, p 19 Scott was sadly disappointed with the exterior of the fortress at Bergen See *Paul's Letters*, pp 17-28 On the 6th they went to Antwerp, where they put up at the 'Hotel de Grande Laboreur,' for an amusing experience of Scott's in connexion with which see Privse L Gordon, *Personal Memoirs, etc*

We visited the places where the English attempted to storm it last year but were unsuccessful after losing many men. On Sunday we were at Antwerp and saw the splendid churches of that city. The French have left little but their exterior architecture to boast of for all the fine paintings by Rubens & others were carried to Paris & in this town the birthplace & habitation of the very first Flemish artists we hardly saw a single good picture. But the churches are most magnificent. We saw the effects of General Grahame's bombardment last year: houses shattered to pieces, vessels sunk in the harbour &c &c. The English are popular here (for their money doubtless) & the people would fain think that Britain would keep them to herself. Yesterday we travelled from Antwerp to Brussels through the richest & most fertile country I suppose in Europe & now covered with large & ripe crops but every where you see memorials of war, houses dismantled, chateaux of the noblesse deserted & gone into disrepair, trees cut down & converted into palisades and so forth. But the country will soon recover for though the French took everything they could they necessarily left the soil & I believe only because they could not carry it off. The people always call them *Les Voleurs* & even the tea-spoons & linen of the beds & tables in the inns did not escape them. One fat dame with tears in her eyes described her set of damask napkins in a tone that would have grieved your very heart. Meanwhile they expect to redeem their losses at the expence of Milords Anglois whose wealth & generosity has no end in their opinion. I believe they regularly charge us about twice as much as their countrymen yet why

(1830), II, pp. 337-38. Gala remarks that the church of St. James in Antwerp "contained the only picture of Rubens allowed by the French to remain in any of the public buildings." Leaving there on the 7th, they stopped at Mechlin, and, passing the Palace of Laeken, arrived at an early hour in Brussels, where they took up their abode at the Hotel de Flandres in the Place Royale.—*Journal*, pp. 24-35. It is interesting to remark that just two months previously Scott's friend, Jane Waldie (later Mrs. Watts), had put up at the same hotel. See her *Belgium and Waterloo: By an English woman* (1817), p. 28.

should we complain when we can dine on a most capital french dinner with two courses & a desert of mulberries cherries of the finest sorts, capital greengage plumbs peaches nectarines &c and drink Burgundy as much as we please for not quite five shillings a piece So our travelling is cheap enough & our living hitherto luxurious But this will have an end for our journey from Mons to Paris will be bad enough We travell in a long black queer looking hearse of a thing open on all sides but with curtains to draw if it rains which holds us very conveniently It is drawn by three horses with a driver who shrieks at them like a highland drover pushing on his bullocks I find no difficulty whatever in making myself understood & even in maintaining a little conversation Gala also comes on capitally Pringle attends & improves but we have had some capital scenes with our friend Bruce One night at Bergen op Zoom we had almost kild ourselves with laughing & though the story is un peu malhonnete I cannot help writing it down We had left him somewhat maliciously to expound to the great fat Dutch landlady his wish to have some warm water for his feet and accordingly he made her a very long though somewhat confused harangue upon this topic But it appeard from her answer that he had totally faild in communicating the nature of his wants for it only produced a solemn assurance on the part of the landlady that he should be satisfactorily supplied with a certain bed-room vessell to which she gave its most popular & broadest name You may imagine what an effect this ambigu produced As for me I even begin to pick up a word or two of Flemish from knowing the German but for the French—bah—I get on like a magpie

I saw Genl Adam<sup>1</sup> yesterday & dine with him today

<sup>1</sup> Sir Frederick Adam, for whom see Vol VIII, p 180 and note 1 Having been wounded at Waterloo, he could not accompany Scott to the battlefield In his MS Journal Bruce says that they breakfasted in the very room where Wellington had slept the night before the battle Scott was escorted by his aide de camp, Captain Campbell, and Pryse Gordon, joined

Tomorrow I go to the field of battle & am to have his aid de camp & a French officer of Bonap[ar]tes *etat major* to expound unto me The next day I dare say we shall leave Brussels & be at Paris four days after Nothing could be kinder than Majr Genl Adam he offerd me horses guides every thing in short I will call on the Duchess of Richmond this morning presuming on your information & my acquaintance with others of her family Kiss all the babies for me I hope they mind their lessons Tell Charles I see little boys like him riding in small cabrioles drawn by goats which trot along very knowingly The dogs are also frequently harnessd to little brouettes<sup>1</sup> but appear to suffer in this hot weather I am now writing before breakfast The English garrison about 500 strong are paraded under our windows The number of wounded officers is very great still though all who can move are gone home or forward to Paris One fine young lad a Dutchman<sup>2</sup> dined with us yesterday at the table d'hôte who was slashd almost to pieces & we see many on crutches or with their arms in slings We went to the Comedie Françoise last night but saw little company & none comme il faut chiefly subaltern officers There is little temptation to rest here after seeing what is to be seen and the road to Paris is quite open & safe since the surrender of Valenciennes Compliments to Miss Millar & all freinds Ever yours most affectionately

W SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

later by Da Costa, who made pretence he had been in attendance on Napoleon's person Bruce, in the letter to his father, says that Scott "had a good deal of conversation with D Acosta" "The Duchess of Richmond" is Charlotte, daughter of Alexander, fourth Duke of Gordon In 1789 she had married Charles (1764 1819), fourth Duke of Richmond and Lennox

<sup>1</sup> Hand carts

<sup>2</sup> In his *Journal*, when recalling the occasion, Gala says "A young, fair haired German officer was present"—p 37 Valenciennes had very recently been surrendered to the allies, but not to the Bourbons, and there had been doubts if Scott's party would be allowed to pass through the town "Miss Millar" is, of course, the governess of Scott's family

TO MRS SCOTT

CHANTILLY SUR L'OISE 13 Augt 1815

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—I wrote to you last from Brussels and the day before I left that city I had your kind letter with the Duchess's introductions to the heroe of Waterloo & the other inclosures. You have been very active in getting it forward for which I am greatly obliged as the letters may be of use to me at Paris. I saw the field of battle in great stile<sup>1</sup> accompanied by one or two officers who had been in the field and mounted on a good horse of Col Price Gordons. It still exhibits a most striking picture of desolation all the neighbouring houses being broken down by cannon-shot & shells. There was one sweet little chateau in particular calld Hougoumont which was the object of several desperate assaults and was at length burnd to the ground. The guards who defended it burnd out of the house retreated into the garden of the chateau & making holes through the brick walls fired out from thence upon the French who held a little wood which surrounded the house. There was an immense carnage

<sup>1</sup> Cf letter to the Duke of Buccleuch, August 1815, Vol IV, pp 78 83. See Scott's description of the battlefield in *Paul's Letters*, pp 194 205. To recollect, that within a short month, the man whose name had been the terror of Europe, stood on the very ground which I now occupied, that right opposite was placed that commander whom the event of the day hailed, *Vainqueur de Vainqueur de la terre*—that the land cape, now solitary and peaceful around me, presented so lately a scene of such horrid magnificence—to recollect all this, oppressed me with sensations which I find it impossible to describe. Among the relics Scott secured was a military *livret* or memorandum book. Pryse Gordon informs us that 'the most precious memorial was presented to him [Scott] by my wife—a French soldier's book, well stained with blood and containing some songs popular in the French army'. On the day after his survey of the field, Scott inscribed some verses on Hougoumont in Mrs Gordon's album—Pryse Gordon, *Memoirs*, II, pp 336 367. The party then proceeded to Mons, Quivrain, Valenciennes (breakfasting at "la Couronne Royale", the latter word recently inserted, though Gala comments that the space on the inn sign "was quite sufficient to contain the word *Imperiale*"), see also *Paul's Letters*, p 263), Cambrai, Peronne Roze, and St Maxence, where they were advised to diverge from the usual route to Paris by Senlis and to take a cross road to Chantilly. There, at the Hotel de Bourbon Conde, they arrived on 13th August. See Scott of Gala, *Journal, etc*, chaps VIII &

on this spot & the stench of the dead bodies is still frightfully sensible A good dog remaind in the house & I saw him quite safe attending his master who had made the stables somewhat habitable I have pickd up some trifles on the field and bought others from the peasants particularly two fine cuirasses which I hope I shall be able to get home I intend one for the Duke & will keep the other for Abb I have also a Croix of the Legion of Honour & some oþher memorials of this dreadful action

We set out three<sup>4</sup> days ago for Paris in a little low carriage on four wheels which we hired for the journey It is very convenient & neat enough Our journey has been safe enough but very singular for this country is neither at war nor absolutely at peace & the number of the allied troops that still pour into it beggars all description You see Cossacks Hulans Pandours Prussians Austrians Hanoverians Dutch Belgians English & Scotch highlanders on foot on horseback in waggons and in every possible mode of conveyance all rushing on to Paris We passd through Valenciennes and breakfasted there though it is still properly speaking in possession of the Bonapartists & is blockaded by the allies It had been bombarded and was partly injured Every other town we passd was garrisoned either by Dutch or British or Prussians & often by all three & the appearance of the different uniforms & national dresses makes the oddest contrast in the world I saw an old Frenchman in the full costume which you see on the stage sitting on a bench with his snuffbox in hand—on the one side of him was a Dutch or German soldier smoking a long pipe on the other an english soldier with a glass of brandy & water The poor Frenchman cast his eyes from time to time on his two extraordinary companions shrugging his shoulders & uttering deep groans Indeed the country is suffering to the very hearts core & well as they have deserved it it is dismal to behold In every town almost there are symptoms of bombardment or of storm As for the country although this is harvest season

& a fine crop on the ground you hardly see any labourers All single houses by the roadside have been sackd or burnd & many villages have experienced the same sad fate In those that are left the windows are shut & closely bard down & the place has the air of a desert The few men you see look at you with a mixture of jealousy hatred & fear & you cannot talk to a woman but she falls a crying The gaiety & spirit of the nation is for the present at least entirely gone & they have a most hopeless & dispirited appearance being as it were struck dumb by the extent of their misfortunes They are tolerably used by the British but very ill by the Prussians who have much to avenge & to say the truth do set about the task without mercy Their officers are not much better than the privates At the Inn at Roye the officers of a Prussian Hussar regiment dined & eat & drank of the best victuals & wine, then orderd out their horses & told mine host they would pay the bill when they came back

We saw on the road large parties of Bony's soldiers who are now disbanded They made part of the garrison of Conde & of all the ruffian figures I ever saw were the most perfectly brutal They fixd their eyes on us with a strong expression of malevolence & no doubt would have been mischievous had they had a safe opportunity but the road is coverd with patroles of cavalry & infantry We came to Chantilly through the forest through a worse road than ever was traversed by a wheel carriage having been entirely destroyd by the passage of cannon This fine place was demolishd in the first fury of the revolution The magnificent stables alone remain & these are filld with wild Hussar horses kicking screaming & leaping about & with their yet wilder riders jumping yelling & hollowing & playing all the mischief they can & chasing each other with their naked sabres in a sort of fun which looks very like earnest <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For much of the foregoing record and for Scott's description of Chantilly see *Paul's Letters*, pp 242 86 On their arrival at Paris, Gala records that



PARIS 15 August

Yesterday we arrived here in safety The town is one great garrison of foreign troops & the English are encamped in the Elysian fields We ran hastily to the Louvre the Comedie & in the evening to the Palais Royale but my head is too much stund with what I have seen to give you any detauld account of it The worst is that the spirit of the Parisians seems quite broken You hardly see a Frenchman of an<sup>y</sup> rank in the public walks or places of amusement & the strangers armd up to the teeth stump about every where in their heavey boots & with their strange caps & long swords I saw two Highlanders (common soldiers) & their wives busy admiring the famous Venus de Medicis & criticizing the works of Titian & Raphael Direct to me Hotel de Bourbon Rue de la paix a Paris & write soon We are very well lodged here Kiss all the children for me & pat Fifi & puss  
Yours ever

W SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

To MRS SCOTT

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—I wrote you some time since but having an opportunity by favour of Lord Castlereaghs

“ we met a friend who had been a short time resident in Paris, and who advised us to lose no time in paying a visit to the Gallery of the Louvre The Prussian government, as he informed us, had already begun to carry into effect the stipulations which had been made for the restitution of their works of art ’ Holland and Belgium would also soon make good their claims In his MS Journal Bruce informs us the friend was “ George Forbes, Sir Wm’s Brother ” After dining at Very’s, the party went to the Opera Comique, where they heard ‘ Jean de Paris ’ by MM St Just and Boildeau, proceeded, “ en regle, ’ to the Palais Royal, and concluded their busy day ‘ with a visit to the Café des Mille Colonnes, where we of course paid our devoirs to the celebrated Deesse, seated on her burnished throne, and gracefully doing the honours of the establishment ’ —*Journal, etc*, pp 77 90 In his account of a visit to this café, Scott’s early friend, James Simpson, the advocate, informs us “ To my great amusement I saw sitting at the right hand of ‘ the throne,’ eating ice, and now and then conversing with the lady, Mr Walter Scott, and with him several of his travelling companions, friends of my own ’ —*Paris After Waterloo, etc* (1853), p 114, where there are several brief references to Scott at this time

cover to send a parcel to Ballantyne I inclose a few lines for you We have been very happy at Paris The Duke of W has been most distinguishingly civil to me He gave a grand ball last friday<sup>1</sup> to all & 'sundry, including the Emperor the King of Prussia &c &c not forgetting the Vieux diable as the French call him old Blucher At supper I had the honour of sitting next the Duke by special invitation & he told me all I could ask him about his campaigns & particularly about the Battle of Waterloo—he is the most plain & downright person you ever knew Lord Castlereagh has also been extremely civil as well as his lady who gives me all sort of invitations general & special I dine at the Duke's today So far as<sup>2</sup> the English are concernd this is a very pleasant place But they have it all their own way the Frenchmen hardly appear & all their people of fashion have left this city I have seen Talleyrand<sup>3</sup> however

Last night at six o' clock I saw a sort of bustle in the Tuilleries I had just dined at a restaurateurs of the first fashion & posted away to see what the matter was when

<sup>1</sup> According to Gala this was "on the occasion of the order of the Bath being bestowed on Blucher, the Duke of Wirtemberg, Schwartzenberg, Wrede, Barclay de Tolly, and other foreign officers in the Hotel de la Reyniere, where Wellington was staying "One of the ladies [in the Duke's company] advanced towards Sir Walter, and invited him to sup at the Duke's table"—*Journal, etc*, pp 122 28 'It is a thing to remember, that I have seen in that hotel the greatest and the bravest whom Europe can send forth from Petersburg to Cadiz, assembled upon the invitation of the British General, and yielding to him, by general assent, the palm of military pre eminence'—*Paul's Letters*, p 466 When, at this ball, Wellington met Blucher with a hearty welcome, 'Walter Scott was, I remember, moved to tears, and said to me, 'Look at that—a few weeks ago these two men delivered Europe!'' Walter Scott observed to me, that if he should venture, in fiction, to depict such a scene as was here presented to our eyes he should be charged with unpardonable exaggeration He was right"—James Simpson, *op cit*, pp 194, 196 Judging from the citations in Simpson's book, there was a goodly quota of Edinburgh society in Paris at this juncture

"At" written, we amend

<sup>3</sup> At this period Talleyrand's plea for a magnanimous treatment of France under Louis XVIII prevailed in all important matters On 9th July he had become foreign minister and president of the council under Louis

I saw the Kings gardes de corps all mounted to attend his coach, he came out with his handkerchief at his eyes & I understand Made de Labedoyere whose husband was the first to desert with his regt to Bony had thrown herself at his feet to beg for mercy for her husband The King answerd that if the crime had been against himself alone he would have forgiven it but justice & the safety of the kingdom demanded an example I next heard that Labedoyere was to be shot in the Champ de Mars I went to see the ceremony but Messrs the National guard would not let me pass I heard however a volley & learned that this fellow who set the first example of treason was no more It is supposed others will be executed I went to the Palais Royal where in addition to the national guard was a strong English detachment of at least two hundred men There was much shrugging of shoulders & turning up of eyes among the crouds which nightly assemble here but it was obvious that the example had the desired effect <sup>1</sup>

I think of returning by Laon to see the grand review of 150,000 men which is to take place there on the 2d or 3d Sepr & from thence I will return home au plus vite

If we live another year & things remain settled I trust we may take a frisk together as far as Switzerland which would be delightful At present I feel no inclination to go farther

I live here much more cheaply than I could do as a bachelor in London although I always go to the very best restaurateurs & drink a bottle of Champagne or Burgundy

<sup>1</sup> For previous observations on the Comte de Labedoyere see Vol IV, pp 85 and note, 86 7 "We have as yet had only one example of severity in the fate of Labedoyere, although no good reason can be given why others of superior consequence, such as Ney and Massena, should not share his fate But the death of this comparatively subordinate agent has acted as a sedative upon the spirit of faction the tone of mutiny and defiance is greatly lowered The handsome sufferer, however, finds the usual degree of favour in the eyes of the fair One lady talked of his execution as *un horreur* 'Did Buonaparte never order such executions?'—'Who? the Emperor?'—'never'—'But the Duc d'Enghien, madam?' continued the persevering querist—'Ah! parlez moi d'Adam et d'Eve,' was the reply'—*Paul's Letters*, pp 431 32

every day instead of Porter & Port wine Kiss all the babies for me & if you write a few lines *immediatly* on getting these I will hear of you all Address to me care of Mr Planta Secretary to his excellence Ld Castlereagh & then put the letter under cover to His Excellence Lord Castlereagh &c &c &c a paris—London—so it will come safe

WALTER SCOTT

Do not say any thing on your letter which you would [not] care for falling into other hands in case of miscarriage

[PM 28 Augt '1815]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—Your letter did not reach me till today having come all the way round by Brussels It brings me however the pleasant account that you were all well & happy in the beginning of the month Mrs Nickie & Miss Dumergue are arrived here I breakfasted with them this morning & have offerd to be their Cavaliere servante in as far as I can be useful I will be quite glad to return some of their kindness in London They are at a great distance quite another quarter of the city We are as gay here as larks I mean the English & foreigners for the French or such as you see are grave enough & with good cause as they have to pay the piper I have been of all Lady Castlereaghs parties great & small & have dined with all the Emperors & great folks at Lord Cathcarts The dinner was quite Russian in compliment to the Emperor whom our military jokers call the Imperial Dandie We had first brandy—then cake—then oysters—then cheese—then brandy again—then a world of other things Old Platoff was presented to me and we said a world of pretty things to each other by signs<sup>1</sup> Apparently

<sup>1</sup> “I ought not to forget Lord Cathcart, whose situation as ambassador to the Russian court gave him opportunities of gratifying the curiosity of his countrymen, by presenting them to the emperor and by making

he took me into great friendship for meeting him the other day on horseback he dismounted gave his horse to one of his Cossacks embraced me with great affection & then mounted again & galloped away Yesterday I went to Versailles with Lady Castlereagh & her suite to see the celebrated waterworks which were set in motion for the first time [these] many years I cannot say that the effect though very fine quite corresponds to the immense expence I have declined being presented to the King of France referring it to some more quiet day The English are rather too much about the poor old man which makes the French call him *Le Prefet d'Angleterre* & Louis l'Inevitable The royal family are unpopular & suffer all the odium of the burthens imposed to maintain the foreign troops although they cannot prevent their remaining here as long as we please In the mean while we junket about run here & there dine upon the turf and drink up all their champagne Our freinds the Prussians are still worse breaking & destroying everything where they are quartered Besides they have the stomachs of devils & eat from four in the morning till twelve at night Our soldiers are allowd no such freedoms but then the French must find them in every thing The money is given to the commissaries who buy the provisions with it for the men Our friend Lady Alvanley and her daughters are here and add much to the comfort of my society After all I begin to tire to get home The great Russian review is put off till the 10th and I begin to doubt if I shall wait for it<sup>1</sup> The Duke of Wellington has been most un-

them known to such men as Barclay de Tolly, Platow, Czernicheff, and other heroes of Kalouga and Beresina"—*Paul's Letters*, p 466 Referring to Cathcart's dinner, Gala says 'At this he [Scott] happened to be seated near Count Platoff, from whom he received much attention, etc'"—*Journal, etc*, p 151 See also *Lockhart*, chap xxxv

<sup>1</sup> But in his *Journal* Gala says "On the 31st August, Sir Walter and I set out at eight in the morning to attend a grand review of the Russian troops, by the Emperor Alexander, and the Allied Sovereigns, etc"—p 187 For Scott's being entertained by Lady Alvanley and her daughters see Vol IV, p 90 and note 2

commonly kind & so have all his military family so that I get all sort of convenience in going about But I think I have seen enough of military doings which after all it is as well to read of as to witness The pictures are disappearing fast from the Louvre I suppose near three hundred have been packd off since I came here

I am truly glad you have askd the Somerville family as they have always shewd such marked attention to us besides it will serve to console your widowhood Some more quiet time you must certainly come to France & proceed as far as Switzerland—the journey would be delightful in this fine weather The only objection is the extreme heat but it begins to be cooler the last two days I am quite a Frenchman in eating & drinking & turn up my nose at roast beef and port-wine—fricasses & champagne are much better—then <sup>1</sup> you have the most delicious fruit huge bunches of grapes peaches & nectarines for nothing at all After all it is a delicious country if the people would be but quiet which I fear they never will

Kiss all the babies for me I am glad to hear they are good children I trust I shall find them all improved in their studies Walter may take the inclosed letter from A Pringle to Yair—the rest will go to the Post office I dont want Macdonalds letter now as he is not here but with the army of the Loire trying to re-organize it for the Kings service <sup>2</sup> I will write when my plans are quite settled for leaving Paris Ever most affectionately yours

WALTER SCOTT

[*late August 1815*]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> 'They' written, we amend

<sup>2</sup> 'Mareschal McDonald, Duke of Tarentum, is intrusted with the difficult task of disbanding and reorganizing the army beyond the Loire, the remnants, namely, of the old imperial army McDonald is equally remarkable for military skill and loyalty'—*Paul's Letters*, p 362

## TO MRS SCOTT

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—I have safely received your kind remembrance of the 24th which brings me the acceptable news that you are all well at Abb This will be the last letter you will have from me until I am once more on British ground Messrs Pringle & Bruce proceed towards Geneva and Switzerland tomorrow and on Saturday Gala & I set out on our return by Rouen & Dieppe<sup>1</sup> In this way I shall be obliged to land at Brighton & pass through London but I will not stay a day therein longer than to take my journey downward to Abbot To day Mrs Nickie Miss D & the two young Slades dine with me at Doyen's and I assure you I have bespoken one of the handsomest dinners he can give us as I know it will give them pleasure to be treated smartly I have bought some little trinkets for the party at Abb necklaces & so forth which I bought at the famous Palais Royale<sup>2</sup> If I find I can get any thing of the lace kind easily brought over I will try to get a veil for you Lady Alvanley has promised to smuggle it for me I gambled one night at the renowned Salon des Etrangers for two or three Napoleons & gained seven or eight so you see I have learned all the bad habits of Paris

<sup>1</sup> Pringle and Bruce went on to Switzerland on 7th September, Scott and Gala left Paris on Saturday the 9th, returning by Muhl, St Germain, Louviers, and Rouen to Dieppe

<sup>2</sup> Gala gives an amusing description of how, in the forenoon of their last day (8th September) in Paris, soon after he and Scott had separated to say farewell to their respective acquaintances, they each found the other examining the shops in the Palais Royal Scott, laughing heartily at their thus meeting one another unawares, said "Your visits don't seem to have occupied much more time than my own, and here we are, in the very midst of temptation, like a couple of moths as we are" After purchasing a few inexpensive souvenirs, they walked along the Passage Vivienne to the Boulevards, where, in a tobacconist's shop, Scott observed a snuff box "representing the cross cut of a small tree, in which the veins and knots were carefully imitated On seeing it, he immediately stopped, saying, 'We must not forget Tom Purdie, by the bye—this is the very thing for him'"—*Journal, etc*, pp 217-19 "In the *Salon des Etrangers*, the most celebrated haunt of this Dom Daniel, which I had the curiosity to visit, the scene was decent and silent to a degree of solemnity"—*Paul's Letters*, p 414

The troops begin to break up from Paris & the Emperors leave it to go to the grand review I find going there would be attended with much difficulty & I have seen great shews of the kind of late so I shall cut it

You must not be anxious if you do not hear of me for some days because I shall not trust country posts If you should have any thing to do in Paris we can tax the ladies If you write to me to the care of John Murray Esq Bookseller Albemarle Street I will get news of you when I come to Londn as I shall enquire there for letters

I have no time to add any more as I must save time for Ld Castlereaghs packet I suppose my poor epistle will travel with all the diplomatic secrets of Europe

Kiss all the party for me and make much of poor fifi & puss I saw a fine puss today of a sort of ash colour with long hair like silk a very pretty creature

There is more news of conspiracies & plots here but you need hardly believe anything of the kind that comes through the English papers Believe me ever yours most affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

PARIS 6th *Septr* 1815

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO MRS SCOTT

BRIGHTON 13th *Septr* [1815]

MY DEAREST CHARLOTTE,—I am just landed here after a most tedious passage from Dieppe <sup>1</sup> We were on the sea from Sunday evening till this morning (tuesday) at twelve & had nothing to eat the whole time but a few oysters & a

<sup>1</sup> After this extremely tedious passage, Scott and Gala disembarked at Brighton on 12th September 'I never saw Scott in better spirits it seemed to afford him the greatest pleasure to find himself once more in his own country, and he constantly looked forward to the day when he should return to Abbotsford Next day we reached London, where we established ourselves at Long's Hotel in Bond Street'—Scott of Gala, *Journal*, etc, pp 233 37



crust of bread I felt no sickness however nor any thing but a little appetite which was partly subdued by fatigue as I have not had my cloaths off & slept *rough* as the sailors say all the way I am much better of my breakfast however & shall be still more so of my dinner which Gala & I take with Sir Edmond Antrobus<sup>1</sup> who met us on the beach & invited us Tomorrow we shall be in London gay & on friday I set my face northwards The custom house officer would hardly look at my trunks when he heard my name so I might have had them stuffd with lace if I had known of his politeness But I have a few things for you & the children I had not your taste to chuse them but you will accept the intencion for the value I have a silk shawl for my mother & one for Miss Millar We have left Paris in time as they have begun to murder the English one poor young man was stabbd on the Boulevards Prussian men & officers are wounded or kild every now & then This only happens at night however & to those who frequent gambling houses of the lower description & other disorderly places

We had an alarm one night on the road—by an accidental delay we were obliged to sleep at a house which resembled in all respects the coupe-gorge rendezvous of a German romance The woman & I had a dispute about the bill which was most unreasonable & she was very sulky At dead of night the garret in which we slept was fiercely attackd by people attempting to enter I calld out in English (quite forgetting where I was) that I would shoot the first who attempted to break the door on which the noise ceased

Next morning we found the cause was the arrival of some benighted travellers English like ourselves who had mistaken their room & were no doubt surprized at the intimation they received from within<sup>2</sup> I have been often

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol VIII, p 74 and note 1

<sup>2</sup> This anecdote is related by Gala as having taken place in a poor and comfortless inn at Louviers The landlady got the best of it in the dispute

glad we had fire-arms with us but I am now much more so on being arrived in a country where there is no use for them so I have locked them in my trunk instead of carrying them in my waistcoat pocket

I saw the Duke de Serent<sup>1</sup> a day before I came away I was determined to postpone my visit till the last as I did not wish the good old man to bother himself with asking me I think he is a little embarrassd with our Piccadilly freinds The Duchess & Comtesse de Norbonne have *not* calld for them which seems to distress the poor old Duke The Ladies calld at his hotel with me It is very elegantly though very plainly fitted up & the Duke seemd to have great pleasure in showing us all the apartments The Countess received the ladies very well & talked of fixing a day to eat soupe Our good friend Nickie made an excellent blunder in telling her that *all the Kernans*<sup>2</sup> were to be with them a piece of intelligence which she seemd to think should be received with all the joy which she herself felt in communicating it Upon the whole I could not help being diverted though vexd at the same time with the exertions the Chere Comtesse made to *seem* happy As for me I received my share of the invitation with all the polite froideur which I could assume & only regretted that I must give my two last days to Lady Castlereagh & Lady Alvanley with whom I had been living all along I thought in all the circumstances it was quite as well to

over the immoderate bill "Scott's revenge ended in his saying, Eh bien, Madame, vous pouvez attendre une visite des allies en peu de jours Je vous assure que les *Prussiens* ne vous payeront pas ainsi C'est possible, Monsieur," was the reply of the landlady, whose imperturbable sang froid it was impossible to get the better of" The "fire arms" were pistols — Scott of Gala, *Journal, etc*, pp 224 26 See also Vol IX, pp 499 500

<sup>1</sup> Armand Louis Duc de Serent (1736 1822), the soldier "Il entra en France en 1814, fut nomme pair de France avec le titre de duc, lieutenant général, gouverneur du château de Rambouillet Scott writes "Norbonne" for Narbonne The Comte Louis de Narbonne Lara (1755 1814), French general and politician, married in 1782 Marie Adelaide de Mont holon

<sup>2</sup> See Vol X, p 38

shew that Countesses were no rarity to me Nickie up-braided the Countess pretty roundly with not having call'd which I thought bad taste but our freinds have a most excellent right to be offended at being treated with any thing approaching to aristocratic neglect by those to whom they were so uncommonly friendly They do not fully see it however & that is a blessing The Kernans are arriv'd & they that is the Piccadilly ladies & their friends have got a most excellent hotel in the Rue des petits carreaux very cheap I begd them not to stay after the armies began to march which they promised I call'd on them often & they seem'd much gratified It gave me most sincere pleasure to be of all the use in my power They help'd me to chuse the silk things but I now regret much not bringing at least one lace veil for you I will not seal this letter till I get to Londn in case any thing should occur

Postscript—13th Sept As we rather slept late this morning & are setting off in a ten o'clock coach I shall only reach London<sup>1</sup> in time to pop this letter into the Post I will write tomorrow or next day Ever yours affectionately

W SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> "September 14—I had intended to take leave of my travelling companion on reaching London but was induced, as may be supposed without much difficulty, to alter this intention, and accompany Scott to the north"—Scott of Gala, *Journal, etc*, p 238 Joined by Mathews, the comic actor, who was engaged to perform at Leamington, they made their homeward journey by Dunstable, Leamington, Kenilworth, Matlock, Peak District, Dovedale, Sheffield, Wakefield, Leeds, Ripon, Middleham, Rokeby, Brough, Appleby, Penrith, Carlisle, Corby Castle, Longtown, and arrived on 26th September at Abbotsford But in his letter to John Ballantyne, 25th September, 1815, Scott writes "I arriv'd here [Abbotsford] last night [i.e. the 24th]"—Vol I, p 484 See letter to Morritt, 2nd October 1815—'My young friend Gala has left me after a short visit at Abbotsford, etc'—Vol IV, pp 100 101

TO MRS SCOTT, NORTH CASTLE STREET, EDINBURGH

MY DEAR CHARLOTTE,—I had your kind letter &c by M[r] Wilson who is still here M[r] Wilkie has also arrived & seems disposed to favour me with a long & somewhat heavy visit

The great news I have to tell you is that I have bought M[r] Mosses farm of Keaside & it is supposed a good bargain—at any rate it adds greatly to the value of Abbotsford & makes a safe investment for cash<sup>1</sup> On Monday a young man comes to survey it that I may know the number of acres &c &c This will postpone my journey to town untill thursday next when I will be with you sans faute I have written to Mr Hume about my duty for the two first days of the Session and shall be more than busy tracing out new inclosures & so forth You must know there is a fine old Roman station and therein have been found a pair of tongs unquestionably Roman & eke & also certain handmills for grinding corn all which are to be mine—& Charles Erskine is so mischievous as to allege that they have raised the value of the property greatly in my estimation

I am delighted with your having found the gairties of the time acceptable & above all that you have got easily through your mobs—for my part I would [not] give one “wheeble<sup>2</sup> of a whaup” from the moss at Keaside for all the fine music you have heard

The children are all excellently well in health & tolerably well in point of attention I say tolerably because poor Thompson<sup>3</sup> is unwell—rather lame poor lad & has not

<sup>1</sup> See Vol IV, p 131 and note

<sup>2</sup> The usual form is “wheeple”=to utter a shrill cry like the curlew or plover “1793 *Statist Acc Scot* VII 601 note, I wad na gie the wheeple of a whaup for a’ the nightingales that ever sang”—*NED* Here Scott alludes to the Edinburgh Musical Festival, 31st Oct 4th Nov, which Charlotte has been attending See Vol IV, p 112 The principal performers were Madame Marconi and John Braham, the programmes included *The Messiah* and works by Pergolesi, Cherubini, Beethoven, and Mozart

<sup>3</sup> i.e. George Thomson, the tutor at Abbotsford

been here these two or three days so I cannot expect the boys to have been altogether so attentive Little Anne is a very good girl & very attentive I have had a round of company since I was a bachelor—first came John Ballantyne—then Mr Wilson & Mr Wilkie & to day Mr Erskine & Mr Rob' Bruce dined with me which cost the slaughter of a turkey Besides this I have dined once at Bowhill & once with Dr Douglas & on Saturday I mean to go to Bowhill again The Duke & I have a wager for a great foot-ball match<sup>1</sup> to be playd in December the parish of Ettricke agt the parish of Yarrow in the castle park at Newark & the old banner of the Scotts is to be hoisted upon the occasion so we must all turn out, & make a jolly thing of it

I have no doubt you will have arranged all the things in my dressing room much better than I could have done I have sold Daisy to M[r] John Ballantyne for 23 Guineas being 3 more [than] I offerd her for at the fair

This has been a very rough day—amounting almost to tempest—but the parlour has not smoked thanks to the old carpet Adieu—the children kiss you as do Fifi & Puss who are very well though the poor girl is rather lean Yours most affectionately

W S

Kiss Fia for me & thank her for her letter though the principal purport of it was to tell me she was in a hurry I wont forget poor Thompsons money with a full hand

[PM 11 November 1815]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> For other references to the match see Vol IV, pp 123 46

LETTERS TO GEORGE ELLIS, RICHARD HEBER,  
BISHOP PERCY, C R MATURIN AND MRS  
MATURIN

Portions of the letters to George Ellis, 1801 to 1813, taken from Lockhart's *Life of Scott* were printed in earlier volumes of this work. Since then many of the originals of the Ellis letters have been discovered, mainly in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, they complete, or add to, the portions already printed in our earlier volumes, and enable us to print letters passed over by Lockhart.

The letters to Richard Heber, 1800 to 1815, are copies from the originals, which are in the possession of his great-grandnephew, Mr Richard H Cholmondeley, who has kindly lent them for this purpose.

Included in this section, and dealing with much the same topics, is a letter to Bishop Percy, and a few letters to Charles Robert Maturin and Mrs Maturin from the originals in the Library of the University of Texas, Austin, Texas, U S A.

The above letters, for the most part, deal with Scott's edition of the Middle English poem *Sir Tristrem*, Ellis's *Specimens of Early English Romances*, Scott's *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, the origination of *The Quarterly Review*, Maturin's plays and novels, and other literary subjects.



## 1800-1826

TO RICHARD HEBER,<sup>1</sup> MALPAS, WHITCHURCH, SHROPSHIRE

JEDBURGH 5 *April* 1800

MY DEAR HEBER,—A thousand thanks for your kind letter which found me at this place paying suit and service at the Circuit court which corresponds to your Assizes. Nothing could have come in better time than your Epistle to relieve the monotony of stupid forms, the tedium of a rainy day, & the disgust inspired by the dirtiest of all dirty Scottish Burghs. To tell you my dear Heber how often we think of you in Edinr & what a blank your absence has made in our little domestic circle would look so like flattery that I shall even let it pass without a word on the Subject. As you have seen Erskine in London he might perhaps tell you that I have had no answer from Lord Kinnaird or his son but have been obliged to commission him to make enquiries about the copy of the *H of Aspen*<sup>2</sup> committed to their charge at Chas Kinnairds earnest solicitation. The instant I shall hear any thing on the subject I shall certainly write to you as there is something in the silence of both father & son which I cannot well comprehend. The peerless Blade, shd you again meet him will tell you all about it. Your kind attention to this

<sup>1</sup> Richard Heber (1773-1833), the well known bibliographer, came to Edinburgh in August 1799 with an introduction to Andrew Dalzel, Professor of Greek at the University. There in Constables shop he met Leyden (see Vol I, pp 110-11 notes) to whom he introduced Scott. On 9th October Heber sends Scott a letter from John Kemble declining to produce *The House of Aspen*—*Walpole Collection*. See our Vol I, p lxxv. 'The peerless Blade' is William Erskine.

<sup>2</sup> First published in 1829 in *The Keepsake* (1830), p 1. See Vol XI, p 252 and note 1.



unfortunate orphan Tragedy merits its parents best acknowledgement as there is neither hurry in the matter itself nor the least anxiety on my part pray let the theatrical potentate take his full time to consider whether he is to extend his golden (I mean *gilded*) sceptre to the Scottish stranger or no—I leave this place on Mondy to return to Edinr where I am very desirous to be as soon as possible, Charlotte having had a severe attack of the Influenza during my absence which has already been of three weeks duration She is thank God now recovering as I am informd by Miss Nicolson in a letter I this day received Camp is very solitary as I did not think proper to bring him upon this expedition along with me knowing his tyrannic disposition towards those of his own species whom he might be quarterd with in his travels I have added to my establishment of favourites since we parted a superb horse calld *Brown Adam* in honor of the Ballad heroe of that name<sup>1</sup>—I am in daily expectation of proofs of such tales of Wonder as I have added to Lewis's stock of *horribles* my own opinion is that we shall overstock the market<sup>2</sup> I shall keep the Border tales in view & am making farther progress in my collection a jaunt into Liddesdale will however be absolutely necessary before much can be done & that can only be undertaken in Summer on accot of the Bogs I can send you no very fresh news of Leyden owing to my long absence from town but I have not lost sight of him, nor as far as has been in my power of his interest—hitherto however nothing has occurr'd which is likely immediatly to answer I respect Leyden's genius & goodness of heart but above all the independence of his spirit which soars so highly above the disadvantages of his present situation I am happy to hear your friend Mr Ellis<sup>3</sup> is making such satisfactory progress in his collection of ancient poetry as I am con-

<sup>1</sup> See *The Border Minstrelsy* (ed Henderson 1902), III, pp 201-4

<sup>2</sup> See Vol I, p 96 and note 2

<sup>3</sup> i.e. George Ellis See Vol I, p 110 and note

vinced it will be an elegant & interesting present to the literary world. If I can be in the least degree useful in his researches, pray draw upon me without scruple *value received* in your kind attention to the H of A. I should like much to see the parody on Roncesvalles<sup>1</sup>. As for the monody on the Magnum, you must not hope for it till your return to Scotland, when we will take one of the deceased's relations into our councils which being emptyd by the *legitimate vent* may have no small effect in inspiring us with words of woe. But soft—the trumpets call me to swagger in a cockd skyscraper & sword, preceded by a Band [of] halbardiers the antiquity of whose persons & weapons might entitle them to be body guards to the Cout of Keeldar—moreover a company of Volunteers whose legs move in such uniformity as would be most aptly represented by the treddles of a weaving loom—such are the attendants of the Man whom the King delighteth to honor. Your compliments to the ladies shall be safely deliverd & I will answer for their being received with pleasure as all your Scottish friends think often & kindly of you & none more so than

W SCOTT

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER, MRS HEBER'S, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

[Extract]

MY DEAR HEBER,—I am about to impose upon you a little commission of Charlotte's who says she is very sure you will not think it too troublesome as it is upon her special account. She has been very far from well & proposes to take the air during the Summer in a little low phaeton upon four wheels such as with a very quiet horse

<sup>1</sup> "As you are an admirer of Lewis's Roncesvalles I wish I cd send you a parody on it by the aforesaid G. Ellis & Ld Morpeth occasioned by Ld Boringsdons tumbling off horseback in a red coat while hunting in Leicester shire." Heber, 31st March 1800—*Walpole Collection*

she may be able to drive with her own fair hands Being infected strongly with the two diseases of the Nation *pride* & *poverty* we have not been able to find any thing here at the same time *neat* & *cheap* enough for the above purpose <sup>1</sup>

As I know you do not delight in Apologies which are generally more fatiguing than the task imposed I shall spare them upon the present occasion & shall only be happy if you can return the Compliment in kind by giving me something to do for you here The Seller must be careful in packing the *Hurly hacket* <sup>2</sup> & I shall remit the price by a Bill on London

I am at present very much fatigued with military duty for which there is but too much cause The people are starving, actually starving & very tumultuously disposed Our Corps has been on guard & patrol duty day & night during great part of last week & we have saved several houses from plunder fortunately sans avoir tire, ni de coups de sabre ni de pistolets altho' much insulted & pelted —My patience began to wax low & I was very near making a fellow who seized my reins, leave brown Adams pledge, the four fingers of his right hand <sup>3</sup> Every thing seems now to be quiet again & I hope will continue so

I am sighing for literary news especially of your friend Ellis's publication of which the world has great expectations If I can be useful in making extracts &c command me freely Ever yours

W SCOTT

Upon shewing to Charlotte what I have written she says I have forgot two things in her commission for mund—*hers* it is—first that she is very impatient & secondly that you must put your glass quite close to your eye when you

<sup>1</sup> For Heber's reply see Partington, *Sir Walter's Post Bag* (1932), pp 10-11 We omit details regarding the phaeton

'Hurlie hacket' = an ill hung carriage (Jamieson, *Dict Scot Lang*)

<sup>3</sup> See stanza xiv of the ballad "Brown Adam," *The Border Minstrelsy* (ed Henderson 1902), III, p 204

inspect the state of the wheels—Is she not a saucy Dame ?  
 Sidney Smith's sermons<sup>1</sup> are come out with great eclat

EDINR 5 May 1800

[Cholmondeley]

TO RICHARD HEBER

DEAR HEBER,—How shall I ever be able to return you sufficient thanks for the prowess with which you atchieved the toilsome & perilous adventure of the Chariot Your letter arrived just in time to reinstate in all its lustre your character as a Man of Gallantry which had begun to grow a little dim during your long silence Perhaps you will be curious to know what we thought of you during your Eclipse One thought the gallant knight had fallen into the snares of some fair Armida—another that the Dæmon of Curiosity had flown away with him to the kingdom of Ireland—I knowing how the enchanter Freston treated the Library of the renown'd Don Quixote suggested that he had immured you among the venerable folios of Stevens<sup>2</sup> & that we should hear nothing of you till the whole collection was scatterd by the magic hammer of Mr Christie—When lo ! the success of the Chevalier Heber put the suspicious to the blush & they said with one voice ha ! Sir Knight well hast thou done like a right good Knight & full of great Courtesie—Seriously we are very much obliged to you indeed & Charlotte only regrets exceedingly that her commission should have cost you so much trouble She is quite enchanted with the idea of gliding along like Queen Mab in her car of nutshell &

<sup>1</sup> *Six Sermons preached in Charlotte Chapel, Edinburgh* (1800) On 24th April Leyden reports to Heber that Sydney Smith will send him a copy 'to make you sleep a nights when disturbed with insomnia'—*MS 939, Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>2</sup> *e* George Steevens, the Shakespeare commentator, who had died on 22nd January, 1800 His books were auctioned by King of Covent Garden on 13th May See W Clarke, *Repertorium Bibliographicum* (1819) pp 543-44 See *Don Quixote*, Part I, Book I, chaps vii, viii

I am no less so in the prospect of her taking exercise which is really of consequence to her health —Inclosed is a spell of a particular kind introduced by the sage Jewish Magicians in the days of old & now of powerful force to bind the Necromancers of Lombard Street at 10 days sight of which you will receive £34<sup>..</sup> 4<sup>..</sup> 6 which will discharge our pecuniary acct but leave me a great debtor for your kind attention to our little commission—pray let me know that the inclosed comes safe by a single line & I shall inform you whenever the Phaeton has finishd its voyage

I intend by the first opportunity to beg your acceptance of a very scarce little Book calld *Il impossibile vencido*<sup>1</sup> It is a grammar of the Biscayan Language printed at Salamanca & is seldom to be procured even in Spain If it is not exactly in your line perhaps it may be an acceptable present to some literary friend You know I am no collector & little of a grammarian so only value any thing of the kind as far as it may oblige a friend Let me know how to send this little *propine*

Leyden has not yet returnd to town —You will be happy to hear I have been able to be at length of some use in procuring for him a little employment which is likely to be attended both with credit & emolument It is to consist in arranging & making a Catalogue for publication of the Mss in the Advocates Library & if this is well executed the faculty will also treat with him for commencing a Catalogue Raisonnee of their great collection, a work which will occupy years & is at once likely to fix his reputation & secure him excellent patronage I assure you I feel extremely happy upon this occasion & am counting the days till he shall return to close matters

<sup>1</sup> *El Imposible Vencido Arte de la Lengua Bascongada Su Author el P. Manuel de Larramendi de la Compañia de Jesus, Maestro de Theologia de su Real Colegio de Salamanca Con Licencia En Salamanca Por Antonio Joseph Villargordo Alcaraz Año de 1792* In his *Essai d'une Bibliographie de la Langue Basque* (Paris 1891), Julien Vinson mentions (p 167) that *El Imposible Vencido* "se trouve dans la plupart des Bibliothèques publiques"

finally as I could of course say nothing about terms till I heard from or saw him

I am very much obliged to you for sending me the Ballads<sup>1</sup>—pray put me down among the Subscribers—I think many parts of Donul & Ewir very fine—my principle criticism is that the phraseology is affectedly obscure—but this is the fault of genius for it was that of Chatterton—I shall transmit the poems in the order you point out among your friends & if it is in my power to encourage the Subscription here I shall not fail to do so as I am sure the Author must have uncommon merit—Take care however that the Gay Goss Hawk or Brown Adam do not slip into his collection as I have laid my clutches on both for the Minstrelsy of the Border—I have compleated a Ballad of Thos the Rhymer which Erskine thinks is executed in a right division—I have also sundry other schemes upon the Tapis amidst which I have lost all interest in the H of Aspen—Kinnaird is very penitential about it as I understand it is not to be recovered from Sheridans clutches—These things grieve not Cecil

Some rhyme a neighbours fame to lash  
Some rhyme (vain thought) for needfu' cash  
For *me* an aim I never fash

I rhyme for *fun* <sup>2</sup>

And fun I should have even were the foresaid Sheridan to clap the whole drama into his next German Pantomime for which to say Gods truth it seems tolerably well fitted—So pray let the other theatrical potentate take his time

I saw Mackenzie<sup>3</sup> a few days ago, he looks but poorly but bears up in point of spirits astonishingly well yet those who know him can perceive a painful exertion—I hope

<sup>1</sup> Robert Jameson's *Popular Ballads and Songs, etc*, 2 vols (1806), where, in vol 1, p 232, appears "Donul and Ewir" beginning "Mark wull and goustie was the nicht" The 'theatrical potentate' is John Philip Kemble

<sup>2</sup> Burns's "Epistle to James Smith" In the first line Scott gives "fame" for Burns's "name"

<sup>3</sup> i.e. Henry Mackenzie, "the Man of Feeling," who had just lost his son Lewis in India

much for the family from the effects of *Time* All your other friends are well & remember you with great kindness—I have sent your note to Laing & shall see he attends to it—As you observe I am not scrupulous in burdening you with commissions pray let me have the encouragement of a return in kind Camp is well & as saucy as ever—he loves a pair of wide trowsers for your sake & seldom fails to set out in chase of the wearer & seems much disappointed when it does not prove to be his old friend—When Leyden returns he shall have your directions Charlotte joins in kind Remembrances & desires I may thank you *beaucoup* mais *beaucoup* Ever dear Heber  
Yours faithfully

W SCOTT

[PM June 10, 1800]

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER

DEAR HEBER,—I just received your letter as we returned from viewing the Phaeton which arrived in safety yesterday—I assure you that as highly as your *taste* was ranked in our opinion, it gained very much upon this occasion—the carriage is exactly what we wanted & more elegant than we could have ventured to expect for the money My Brother who sent a similar commission to London is informed he can have nothing which will suit him under 40 Gns & envies the success of our Chevalier excessively—Charlotte sends you her very best thanks & is quite enchanted with her chariot—I assure You she is very proud of her knight—The “Minstrelsy of the Border” continues to make progress Leyden is in Cumberland<sup>1</sup> & I understand by a late letter has been

<sup>1</sup> When (in June 1800) Leyden heard that his father (John) was dangerously ill, he induced him to go to Gilsland spa for the medicinal waters. Accompanying him so far, he parted from him in Liddesdale and went on to Carlisle to see the Glenriddell MS (see Vol I, p 140 and note 2, and Introd *Border Minstrelsy*, ed Henderson 1902, vol 1, p 167) and to search

meditating the crime of pilfering a Ms for me As I have not heard from him since, I hope in God he has escaped the Sleuth hounds & the Hot Trade<sup>1</sup>—I wish him much to return & yet I do not know how to write to him I think if he is “prisoner ta'en” I must carry the posse comitatus of the Forest to storm Carlisle Castle & set him at liberty *via facti* I understand he has been visiting his father at Gilsland

I must not omit to tell you that Crichton<sup>2</sup> reports in the most favourable terms of the condition of the Phaeton, & that Charlotte is overjoyd to find she can pull it about herself in case the Shely shall weary Ever dear Hebe[r]  
faithfully Yours

EDINR 12 June 1800

W SCOTT

I shall fillip Laing tomorrow

[Cholmondeley]

TO RICHARD HEBER, MALPAS, WHITCHURCH, SHROPSHIRE

DEAR HEBER,—I have been for these three weeks past reproaching myself with that sin which is worse than witchcraft<sup>3</sup> on account of not having acknowledged the

for the old ballad, ‘The Duel of Graeme and Bewick’ (*op cit* III, p 75 *et seq*) Evidently he was unsuccessful in securing the ballad, a copy of which Scott eventually obtained for the *Minstrelsy* from Laidlaw in January 1803 (see our Vol I, p 169) See J Reith, *Life of Dr John Leyden* (1908), pp 107 110, and James Sinton’s paper on ‘Leyden’s Border Tours’ in *Trans Hawick Archaeol Soc* for 1906 (1906), pp 19 26

<sup>1</sup> i.e. the Hot Trod “The pursuit of Border marauders was followed by the injured party and his friends with blood hounds and bugle horn, and was called the *hot trod* He was entitled, if his dog could trace the scent, to follow the invaders into the opposite kingdom, a privilege which often occasioned bloodshed”—Note 3 W, Appendix to *The Lay of the Last Minstrel*, Scott’s *Poetical Works* (1833 34), p 66

*The Edinr P O Directory* for 1805 6 gives “Crichton, P coachmaker, head of Leith Walk”

<sup>3</sup> Ingratitude See Vol IV, p 3 and note The exciseman uses this maxim when addressing Commodore Truncheon in Smollett’s *Peregrine Pickle*, chap xiv



receipt of Mr Ways *fabliaux* <sup>1</sup> & my conscience pricks me the harder as I have subjected Madame to the same suspicion altho she has been a very Starling in reminding me to return you her very best thanks for the most elegant & amusing present she has ever received On my part I can only say that with all my admiration for the original which is great & for Mr Ways translation which in many parts might do honor to Dryden, still I hold the notes & illustrations of your friend Mr Ellis as even the most valuable part of the Publication It excites my expectation very strongly as to his present work <sup>2</sup> which I hope continues progressive

For this fortnight past I have been much engaged with some criminal trials the most unpleasant of all professional Duty This has interfered a good deal with my literary employments if the raking up of old Ballads deserves the name Tomorrow Charlotte & I set off in the little chariot for Selkirkshire where I am offerred a beautiful situation for a cottage upon the Braes of Yarrow We find the Phaeton more useful than we could have ventured to expect as Charlotte has a steady horse which She drives every where with her own fair hands —We saw the Tytlers last night who are well & so are the Mackenzies Camp sends best love—Mrs Scott joins me in hoping that you will lounge back to Scotland some day soon & I am ever Dear Heber Yours mo faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

LASWADE COTTAGE 28 July 1800

[*Cholmondeley*]

<sup>1</sup> Pierre Jean Baptiste Le Grand d'Aussy's *Fabliaux or Tales, Abridged from French Manuscripts of the XIIth and XIIIth Centuries Selected and Translated into English Verse by the late Gregory Lewis Way, Esq with A Preface, Notes, and Appendix by G Ellis, Esq* 2 vols (1796 1800) See *ALC* p 187

<sup>2</sup> *Specimens of the Early English Poets* (1801)

TO THOMAS PERCY, RIGHT REVEREND THE LD BISHOP OF  
DROMORE, DROMORE, BY PORT PATRICK, IRELAND

MY LORD,—I should be under no small anxiety with regard to the reception which an intrusion upon your Lordship might meet with, had I not been assur'd by the Interest you have been pleas'd to express to Dr Anderson<sup>1</sup> in my proposed publication of Border Ballads that notwithstanding your present more important Studies & avocations your Lordship still retains some attachment to those pursuits which procured the Editor of the first & only classical collection of ancient poetry a place among the highest of our English Literati—I have been also so particularly flatter'd by the trouble your Lordship has taken to gratify the curiosity of a Stranger as to the story of Sir Eger that I should feel myself deficient in the com-

<sup>1</sup> Robert Anderson, M D (1750 1830), for some time editor of *The Edinburgh Magazine*, author of *A Complete Edition of the Poets of Great Britain* 14 vols (1792 1807) Letters between Anderson and Bishop Percy in the *Nat Lib Scot* reveal that it was Anderson who brought Scott and Percy into communication with one another On 21st June, 1800, Anderson writes to Percy that an ingenious friend [*i e* Scott], a native of Teviotdale, is transmitting *The Eve of St John* and *Glenfinlas* for Percy's opinion, this 'in testimony of his high respect for your character and of his gratitude to the Editor of 'The Reliques,' upon which he formed his taste for ballad thinking and expression"—*MS 911, Nat Lib Scot* On 8th August Percy writes to Anderson "Let me now thank Walter Scott Esq for the most obliging Present of his fine Specimens of Scottish Ballad Writing I am too much wedded to the pleasures (I believe I shd rather say *Follies*) of my youth, not to have a strong predilection for such Compositions and the affecting simplicity of manner as well as Doric Rusticity of Dialect have always appeared to me to give those of your Country a great advantage" Again, on 20th September 'Amidst my hurry of interruption I have in the inclosed paper endeavoured to answer Mr Scott's inquiries concerning the old metrical Romance of *Eger & Grime*, which you will be pleas'd to deliver to him with my Compliments & if he shd have occasion to quote it, I desire he will not mention me by my professional Title, but merely as the Possessor of the old folio MS or the original editor of the Reliques of anct Eng Poetry in 3 vol 12mo My appetite for Treats of this kind is not now so keen as it was 40 years ago, when I was persuaded to work up the Reliques &c"—*MS 22 4 10, Nat Lib Scot* "Mr Percy" is the Bishop's nephew, Thomas Percy (1768 1808), son of Anthony Percy of Southwark The fourth edition (1812) of the *Reliques* was edited ostensibly by him See note in our Vol I, p 108, where mention is made of a letter from Scott to the Bishop "not now extant" but the above is the letter

mon duties of civility did I not take the earliest opportunity to express my most respectful thanks accompanied by the tender of such trifling services as I may be able to render Mr Percy in the publication of the 4th volume of the *Reliques* with which I understand he intends to favour the public In particular if a brief & accurate analysis of the contents of the volume of Metrical romances in Our Faculty Library in Edinr so often mentd & referd to in the essay prefixd to the third vol of the *Reliques* wd be acceptable I have it in my power to supply it with ease as the volume was in my possession for more than two years so that I can point out much which in the cursory survey taken by the revd & worthy Dr Blair has been overlookd or misapprehended

I have subjoind a list of such border ballads as are to be included in my publication which I understand from Dr A—— your Lordship is desirous of seeing I have rejected several of little merit & am still in hopes of adding to those which may seem worthy of preservation My long & early residence in the South of Scotland, my connection with several respectable & ancient families there together with my official situation as Sheriff of the fforest has enabled me to enlarge this proposed collection beyond my original expectation The songs are divided into two classes namely the *Raiding Ballads* (as they are calld) relating to the forrays & predatory incursions made upon the Borders & the Romantic or popular Ballads founded upon circumstances entirely imaginary The former is naturally the Class about which I am most anxious—my collection of the latter is much larger than I propose to use By Notes & Introductions to each Ballad (humbly following the plan of the R. of Anct Poetry) I will endeavour to introduce my readers to *Dramatis personae* of the Ballad & to such passages of local history & tradition as may explain or illustrate the tale itself

I have been thus tedious in explaining the plan of my Work because I think the intention will meet your Lord-

ships approbation however deficient the execution may eventually prove As your Lordship has already shewn so liberal a readiness to gratify my inquiries I hope your goodness will excuse me when (like an importunate beggar) I make a farther request In the Reliques p 297 Vol 1st Reference is made to a Ballad on the escape of the E of Westmoreland into Flanders as contained in your Lordship's valuable MS If I durst venture to hope that Mr Percy (if he does not propose to include this poem in his 4th volume) would permit it to be copied for my little work it would lay me under a very particular obligation which tho I can hardly hope to repay I should at all times be proud to acknowledge I have some notes regarding this unfortunate Nobleman who was long protected by the Laird of Buccleuch in his castle of Branksome—to whose descendant the present worthy Duke I intend to dedicate these Ballads both from motives of personal respect & gratitude & from his being the Chief of a powerful & warlike border Clan I proceed to my list which however I still regard as imperfect & I have the honor to be with the greatest possible respect My Lord Your lordships most obedt & very humble servant

EDIN 6th October 1800<sup>1</sup>

WALTER SCOTT

*[Here follows a list of raving ballads and fragments The ballads are all in "The Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border" The fragments are Hardens Cow, John Thompson, Fragment of Flodden, Battle of Philiphaugh, Raid of the Peaths, Gallant Grames, Fair Maiden Lyllyard To this last Scott appends "Wanted—Jock of the Gingles, Johnnie Cox, Death of the Outlawd Murray Of these last I have no fragment"]*

In addition to this class I hope to present the public with some modern imitations of merit as I am promised the assistance of my poetical friends & if the entire Ballads cannot be recovered the fragments may be wrought into

<sup>1</sup> For Percy's reply of 10th December to this letter see Vol I, p 108 note

these The leading trait in these ballads is a very peculiar strain of rude energy mixd with a savage pleasantry marking that the authors regarded the Battle only as "the play of Swords"

Romantic Ballads intended for the Minstrelsy of the Border—with one or two Lyrical pieces

[*Here follows a similar list, beginning with "Thomas the Rhymer" All of them are in the "Minstrelsy" A "Lyllewake Dirge" is described in the list as "Duge of Northumbrian Papists"*]

Old Ballads & fragments which I have collected but have not determined on publishing

[*Again a list, beginning with "John the little Scott"*]

Few of these Ballads have been printed & of these few my Editions differ from those publishd Should your Lordship wish to see any of these ballads they shall be copied & forwarded as you may be pleased to direct

[*New York Public Library*]<sup>1</sup>

TO RICHARD HEBER, POST OFFICE, PLYMOUTH DOCK

LASWADE-COTTAGE, 19 October 1800

MY DEAR HEBER,—I received your letter<sup>2</sup> with the greatest pleasure as it assured me you were both well & well amused, tho I am selfish enough to hope that you may meet with nothing so very interesting as to deprive us of the prospect of seeing you in winter which I understand is not unlikely As to the matter of the Play<sup>3</sup> you

<sup>1</sup> This letter is printed from a photostat of the original, sent from Mr Wilham Ruff, 2041 Yale Station, New Haven, Conn He contributed it to *Notes and Queries*, November 4, 1933

<sup>2</sup> Of the 9th in which Heber asks for news of Leyden and reports he has heard of Jameson's visit to Scott, when he "found you beforehand with him in the greater part of the provincial poetry he had collected"—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>3</sup> *The House of Aspen* Heber in a letter expresses great surprise at Kemble's rejection—*Walpole Collection* See Vol I, p 124 note

know too well my opinion about these things to suspect me of expressing more than my real sentiments when I say that as the Managers are best judges how they should expend their money, so also sharpend by self Interest I believe they must be farther admittted tolerable Judges of what is likely to please the public—as to my own feelings—these things grieve not Cecil—Were I not ashamed to request your acceptance of the dishonord Ms I should beg it might remain in your Library for your own amusement & that of your freinds for I am determind never to make any application at the other Shop where I think my goods would be yet more unsuitable Pray consider the H of Aspen therefore as your own property—I wish to God it were worth the trouble it has cost you—The Border tales go merrily on the printing will commence in three weeks—I have been successful beyond my expectation in procuring originals and have tried my hand upon one or two new Imitations—none however equal to the E[ve] of St John or Glenfinlas—Whenever I get to town which alas! will now be very soon I will have them copied for you—Leyden has been with me ever since his return from the Highlands (about a fortnight) & has commenced a valiant Defender of Ossian<sup>1</sup>—we work hard at

<sup>1</sup> On 14th July Leyden left Edinburgh to conduct two German boys on a tour of the North and West of Scotland. They returned to Edinburgh at the beginning of October. See J. Reith, *Life of Leyden*, pp. 116-139. From Oban on 14th August Leyden, who has been visiting Macnicol of Lismore, writes to Constable, proposing, as a contribution to the Ossianic controversy, a reprint of Macnicol's ancestor's book, *The Remarks on Dr Johnson's Tour*. He has found the knowledge of his host renders him "by far the fittest antagonist to encounter Laing" (i.e. Malcolm Laing), whose Dissertation on Ossian's Poems (included in his *History of Scotland* 1800) Leyden advises Constable to send Macnicol for his use in the matter—MS 331, *Nat Lib Scot*. In the course of a letter to Heber, from "Laswade Cottage Novr 4 1800," Leyden states his conviction that Ossian is 'far from being a forgery of Macphersons as a prodigious number of old poems and songs are still current in the highlands, of transcendant poetical merit

I endeavoured to excite some of the Gaelic Literati to answer Mr Laings Dissertation against the authenticity, but these sons of the hills are so fiery that they would probably injure the cause—MS 939, *Nat Lib Scot*. See Scott's letter to Anna Seward [Sept 1806], Vol I, pp. 320-4, and J. S. Smart, *James Macpherson An Episode in Literature* (1905), especially pp. 168-78.

old Ballads during the forenoon & skirmish in the Evening upon the old disputes betwixt the Cameionians & their opponents—You know I am a bit of a Cavalier not to say a Jacobite, so I give his Presbyterian feelings a little occasional exercise He has made two very good Ballads indeed—One on the subject of Keeldar which I think was begun before you left Caledonia, the other upon the boiling of Lord Soulis the Liddesdale tyrant, whom he has dishd up in great stile—no Irish stew was ever equal to him—

On a circle of stones they placed the pot  
A circle of stones but barely nine  
They heated it red & fiery hot  
Till the burnishd brass did glimmer & shine

They wrapd him in a sheet of lead  
A sheet of lead for a funeral pall  
They plunged him in the caldron red  
And they melted him lead & bones & all <sup>1</sup>

Do you not think he has got well over a difficult passage—I have no doubt his appointment in the Library will be useful to him & shall not fail to watch & if need be to pray on his behalf I can promise nothing for my own Interest—but some of my freinds as little Moshes says may have a freind & I shall set all strings to work for poor Leyden

Jamieson spent a day with me when he was here—he had been at Mrs Browns of Faulkland<sup>2</sup> & got one or two good poems from her, but I think I had most of the rest of his collection You will readily believe that far from wishing to hurt his collection I did all in my power to

<sup>1</sup> “Lord Soulis,” stanzas lxiv, lxv See *Border Minstrelsy* (ed Henderson 1902), iv, p 240 See also *Guy Mannering*, Border Ed, ii, chap vii, p 80, with Lang’s note, p 344

<sup>2</sup> Through Professors Gilbert Gerard (1760 1815) and Robert Eden Scott (1770 1811), both of King’s College, Aberdeen, Jamieson obtained transcripts from Professor Scott’s aunt, Mrs Brown of Falkland See Jamieson, *Popular Ballads and Songs, etc*, i, pp iv v *et seq*, where an account is given of the author’s first meeting Scott in Edinburgh and of the almost simultaneous progress of their collections It was at Dysart that Jamieson visited Mrs Brown in 1800

assist him—gave him several copies & even resign'd some poems I had intended myself to publish Indeed my heart being chiefly set upon the Border raid Ballads I was less anxious about those which are merely romantick & popular of which I believe an attentive Collector who would collect from recitation in the pastoral parts of the Country & not from Libraries in great towns might still recover a very great number indeed—Charlotte sends her best & kindest remembrances to you—our little girl is just recovering from Inoculation & her Mother from all the perturbation & anxiety proper to the occasion—The little Chaise is a very great convenience indeed Charlotte drives herself every where—the servant only attending on horseback—I have not been able to find a spot exactly suitable in Selkirkshire for my proposed cottage—so that I must for the present be content to leave “puing the birks on the braes of Yarrow” & satisfy myself with those of the Eske which are inferior to few in romantic scenery

Upon your hint I have written I hope a proper letter to Dr Currie<sup>1</sup> acquainting [him] with my plan & requesting his assistance as a friend to Scottish Literature I have open'd also a correspondence with the Bishop of Dromore Some of the ballads I have recover'd are very fine indeed—What think you of this verse—

“O is my Basnet a widow's curch  
Or my lance a wand of the willow tree  
Or my arm a lady's lily hand  
That an English Lord shd lightly me ?”<sup>2</sup>

I envy your acquaintance with the Son of Thunder<sup>3</sup> who frank'd your epistle—it is delightful to see a great Man—I rejoice Mr Ellis proceeds successfully—if we can help

<sup>1</sup> For Scott's letter to Currie of 18th October and Currie's letter of 28th November see Vol I, p 103

Stanza x of “Kinmont Willie” See *Border Minstrelsy* (ed Henderson 1902), II, p 60

<sup>3</sup> Canning, probably



him here, speak & speed—All friends are well—Tytlers in the North—Erskine *married* to a daughter of Professor Robison the Illumine—a lovely girl who will make our peerless blade very happy—the Mackenzies all well—also the Stuarts—Health & fraternity

W SCOTT

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER, MRS HEBERS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

DEAR HEBER,—I send you a tale of the Times of Old which would have waited on you long ago had I not hope[d] to have been the prophets Master of Ceremonies in person The traditions of Chivalry alluded to require no explanation, but the conclusion is founded upon a popular article of faith regarding the Rhymer which may be new I am much disappointed in not finding myself able to make good my journey to London this spring I should have liked to have been among you during the bus[tle] [*MS cut off*] of this eventual<sup>1</sup> period but it may not be I am happy to hear of Mr Ellis' plan regarding the old metrical Romances which I have learnd from Leyden I shall think myself very happy in assisting him from our invaluable folio Ms which is once more snug in my possession I intend shortly to transmit you a brief of its contents—I believe we will try one or two here for the honor of Scotland at least I wish Sir Tristram to make his appearance first in Edinr<sup>2</sup> Did you ever hear of a printed copy said to be in the hands of Mr Ritson If this be so & he chooses to undertake the publication pray inform him I shall resign in his favour and willingly assist

<sup>1</sup> Apparently for “eventful”—the peace of Amiens

<sup>2</sup> On 21st March Leyden informs Heber that he “had undertaken to be editor and had transcribed about 1000 lines” of *Sir Tristram* when, finding it became too “free and easy,” he declined to put his name either in the title or at the preface “Constable wishes Scott to do this—which I think he may safely venture on” If Ritson and Ellis will send proof sheets of their publications and extracts, “Scott and I will collate them accurately with our MS”—*MS 939, Nat Lib Scot* “Our invaluable folio MS” is the Auchinleck MS, which is in the Nat Lib Scot, *MS 19 2 1*

him in the various readings I believe I must express a difference of opinion from his respecting the Souters of Selkirk I think I have recovered some additional evidence & having myself *luckd the birss* I am bound in honor to vindicate the laurels of the Coblers of yore—The tales of the Border will I think swell into three volumes 8vo by the assistance of Introductions notes &c &c so that the publication will not take place till Xmas next

Charlotte begs to be kindly remembered—our little girl is very well & Camp in his usual state of ferocious activity I hope for a long letter one of these days (as you owe me one) & will be happy to find it give us any prospect of again seeing you here Pray do not give any copies of the Rhymer Ever Yours faithfully

EDINR 10 March 1801<sup>1</sup>

WALTER SCOTT

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

[*March 27 1801*]

DEAR SIR,—<sup>2</sup> You will observe that in the first line there is a Blank of one word at the End, this is owing to the illumination having been cut out & so irregularly as to incroach upon the text—The important word wanting seems unquestionably to be *Erceldoune*, the verse would then run thus

I was at Erceldoune  
With Tomas'spak I thare &c

Thro the whole poem the narrator always speaks of what

<sup>1</sup> Along with this letter is a transcript of Thomas the Rhymer part 3 in Scott's own handwriting For "the birss" see Vol IV, p 151 and note 1

<sup>2</sup> For the opening paragraph "As I feel to form for itself" see Vol I, pp 110 11 We have also omitted some paragraphs describing the poem which Scott is to edit In an undated letter, apparently a reply to this of Scott's, Ellis asks for a rule which will assist in deciding whether a poem in *very early English* be English (commonly so called) or Scottish? That there is a great difference in the early orthography, I readily admit But, do you think you could point out in Sir Tristram (for instance) any *words or phrases* which can be depended on as a criterion? —*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

he had heard from Tomas but never assumes the person of the Prophet This is my chief reason for believing that it is not the original Romance That the word wanting is Erceldoune seems clear from the rhyme of the Stanza It may remain a matter of some doubt whether Thomas the Rhymer ever committed his poem to writing—R de Brunne says (I quote from memory) speaking of Tristram

Over al gestes it hath the steem  
Over al that is other that was  
If men it said as made Tomas<sup>1</sup>—

Had the poem been written down, one would think the rehearsers might soon have learned a correct edition At the same time this is not conclusive—nay the Romance of which I am writing is said to be given from what the Narrator “heard *read in roune*” so that unless we suppose that *read* is here to be taken as equivalent to the German *reden* the passage will infer that there was written authority for the tale But I know no instance in old Romances of the real author using such a finesse as to talk of himself in the second person So much for Query 1st

I have no doubt that the poem is Scottish & of great antiquity—greater probably than any other in the same valuable collection all of which (that excepted) seem to be English Nay there are some marks that the writer did not fully comprehend what he transcribed, errors & omissions being more common in Sir Tristrem than in any of the other poems There is by no means the same obscurity as in Pinkerton's two Scottish Romances,<sup>2</sup> I

<sup>1</sup> See *The Chronicle of Robert Manning of Brunne*, Part I, ed F J Furnivall (Rolls Series 1887), p 4, lines 98 101

“Over gestes it has þe steem,  
Over alle that is or was,  
if men it sayd as made Thomas,  
But I here it no man so say”

<sup>2</sup> Pinkerton's two romances are *Gawan and Gologras* and *Sir Gawan and Sir Galaron of Galloway* in the third volume of his *Scottish Poems*, reprinted from scarce editions, London, 1792 The first was taken from the Chapman and Myllar collection Ritson accused Pinkerton of having got the second surreptitiously from a friend to whom Ritson had lent the manuscript Pinkerton's editing of the whole work was very slovenly

mean the printed Copies, for (*pace tanti viri*) many of the difficulties seem to arise from misreading & misprinting

I certainly wish to give my Countryman in his native dress to the public that is if I find a Bookseller who has public spirit enough to undertake to throw off a very limited edition I must trouble you to return the sheets which I send for your Inspection (after having had them transcribed if you wish it) as my own eyes sometimes fail me & I find it difficult to procure a good Amanuensis These pages are transcribed by Leyden, an excellent young Man of uncommon talents patronised by our friend Heber, & who is of the utmost assistance to my literary undertakings—

You are very flattering in your approbation of the trifles which I gave Lewis I hope my London friends understand that I have no concern in the publication except that of having made these gratuitous contributions

The curious & interesting question which you put regarding the Introdn of french words & phrases into Scotland I cannot immediatly answer but the hint shall not escape my memory when I get nearer my books & papers than I am at present I will be much obliged to you if in what you say of the Knight of Lionel you announce my intended publication

Permit me to state a query to you about Sir Gawaine *Our Traditions* & father Chaucer himself represent him as the flower of Courtesy On the contrary the *Morte Arthur* & other French Romances & translations stigmatize him as a foul Murtherer of Women & of disarmd knights—a worthy Brother in short of the Traitor Modred How comes this ?—I am deeply interested in your publication & know nothing would give me more pleasure than to contribute to its success If accurate transcripts of any of the Romances which we have here would be acceptable I will have them done under my own eye for you, because I do not think this a proper place for publishing things of

the kind—We have in our folio an excellent Romance of Art[hou]r & Merlin—I believe unique—Another termed Sir Otuel<sup>1</sup>—the beginning of which is very spirited—it is a Romance of the Douze Pairs & Chailemagne—Also Orfeo & Herodeis (a Gothicised edition of Orpheus & Euridice) where Herodeis is carried off by the fairies—

Many thanks to Heber for his Postscript—I think of an undertaking upon which I wish for his opinion & for yours (for are we not already a hundred years acquainted) something of an abridgement of the most celebrated Sagas,<sup>2</sup> selecting the most picturesque Incidents & translating the *Runic Rhymes*

My Border Ballads will see the light in the beginning of the Year—Believe me Sir, Your faithful & very obdnt Servt

WALTER SCOTT

LASWADE COTTAGE

BY EDINBURGH

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR SIR,—I should long ago have acknowledged your instructive letter of 2d<sup>3</sup>

I think I can even perceive some of the Obscurity of which R. de Brunne<sup>4</sup> accuses those who in his day attempted to recite the Bard of Erceldoune's poem. In

<sup>1</sup> See Ellis's letter, 17th August 1801, in M. I. O'Sullivan, *Firumbras and Otuel and Roland* (E. E. T. S., No. 198, 1935), pp. xi f.

<sup>2</sup> In his undated letter Ellis had said "Heber, & Douce (whom you must be acquainted with hereafter) and myself are delighted at your project about the Sagas. I can assure you very sincerely that I had rather see such a project on your hands than on those of any man who has written lyric poetry since the time of Gray"—MS. 873, *Nat. Lib. Scot.*

<sup>3</sup> For the remainder of this paragraph to "the essence of Tomas's work" see Vol. I, p. 112.

<sup>4</sup> *The Chronicle of Robert Manning of Brunne*, ed. F. J. Furnivall (Roll Series), vol. 1, p. 4, ll. 98-100.

some places there are evident omissions, & in one or two I think false readings "Rouland that was *thro*" for example should certainly have been *pro*' (*preux*) or *po* used as an expletive I can make no sense of the passage otherways I cannot entirely accede to your interpretation of *rede* in *roune*, because I find that Tristrem is also said to write in *roune*—yet that may also mean to write with *mystery* The sense I had attached to it was "there heard I told in *verse*" *Yare* means I think our Scottish word *yair* early—"Ye're up *yair*" *fosterd Yare* would therefore mean fosterd early—when young—*His bold borwes he ches*—this puzzles me much—taking *borwes* for *Boroughs* it may mean he selected to himself Rolands brave towns—just as Denmark has *chesen* *Hamburgh*, but this does not satisfy me by any means I am very much obliged to you for *reped hum many ares* which I think I shall make out from your hints tho' it is a horrible quagmire to struggle through "Lan" is I think the perfect of "Linne" to leave off—"they *linned these troublous noises*" says old Patten<sup>1</sup>, *Bln & Blan* have nearly the same signification "*To gwe broche & Beize*" occurs in the Ms again as a distribution of gifts or honours—to give stars & garters in short *Beize* I therefore suppose is rightly rendered coronet—"Ioien his" A truce was made that each should *enjoy*

<sup>1</sup> Our Northern prikkers never linde these troublous & daungerous noyses all ye night long"—William Patten, *Expedicion into Scottlāde, etc* (1548), L iv b In an undated letter Ellis discusses the various words 'I believe with you that 'Ermony' cannot reasonably be *Armenia* Neither do I quite believe that it is so in the romance of Sir Bevy's but here it is almost impossible I have, at the same time, some doubts about *Germany*, & half suspect that Ermony was in England Lye in his Saxon Dicty mentions an *Erming Street* as a famous Roman road, leading from Clausento (Southampton?) to Menevia (where is Menevia) or, *perhaps*, to *Carlisle* (See Edward Lye's *Dictionarium Saxonico, etc*, tom 1 (1772), under 'ER') Caernarvon means, as I have always heard, *Caer en-ar von*, i.e. the castle opposite to Vona, *Mona*, Anglesey Why should not *Er mony* mean that part of Wales? This is however, I must confess, a very wild conjecture By the way Sir Tristram is quoted as the author of all the sage precepts on the art of hunting compiled by the good Lady Juliana Berners authoress of the Boke of St Albans Thank God that I do not yet know Leyden, if he is determined to go on his wild goose chase to Africa.—MS 873, *Nat Lib Scot* For another excerpt from Ellis's letter see Vol I, p 113 note 2

*his own* during a truce of seven years founded on the *status quo* —Pray what do you think of Ermonie ? I suspect it to be Germany pronounced Yermany It is coupled with Almayne in one place Armenia is too far removed from the scene of action I intend to write to you very fully upon my doubts & difficulties, (since you are so good as to allow me to consult you upon these knotty points) as soon as I get my transcript compleated <sup>1</sup>

The name of Arthur is I believe unknown in Scottish Tradition unless at a village calld Meigle in Strathmore where many of the adjacent places take their name from him & where they pretend to shew the tomb of Queen Genever, which name they pronounce Gānore, who they tell you was given up to be devourd by wild beasts for Adultery About eight years ago when I was there with the proprietor Mr Murray of Symprym we dug up several curious pieces of sculpture in that place representing armed knights &c also a quantity of Ashes & melted brass A very odd Monument apparently of extreme antiquity had been dug up some time before It represented a person attended by a large train driving a sort of open Chariot very different from any thing *Roman* that I ever saw Below him in another copartment was a person devourd by a wild beast & hunters shooting at the animal with arrows The whole Entablature was highly ornamentd—If you wish it I will endeavour to get you a faithful sketch How the fame of Arthur should “survive in this sole spot” I cannot possibly conceive but so the fact is <sup>2</sup>

To return to our Romances I long to hear how far Mr Douces<sup>3</sup> *Ms* differs from the sketch I have sent you & can hardly express my thanks sufficiently for the Interest

<sup>1</sup> For the paragraph which follows, “You shall have Sir Otuel five miles from Catrail, see Vol I, pp 112-114 There is no omission after “additions” (p 113) in the original

<sup>2</sup> For next paragraph, “Leyden has taken up throw himself away,” see Vol I, p 114

<sup>3</sup> Francis Douce, for whom see Vol I, p 221, note

you have so kindly taken in my intended publication Sir Otuel shall wait upon you shortly the beginning is highly spirited & is not at all connected with Fierabras If the poetical History does not soon reach Leyden & me our Border stock of Patience will be speedily exhausted Nothing will give me [more] pleasure than receiving a copy unless indeed [it] were an opportunity of assuring the ingenious author in person how much I am his very faithful & devoted friend

WALTER SCOTT

LASWADE COTTAGE NEAR EDINR

20 April 1801

By the way what is there to hinder our friend Heber from enlisting you in his next Scottish expedition I have often proposed shewing him the South of Scotland & it would be an additional pleasure to exhibit to you also the *lions of our wilds*

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

DEAR SIR,—I cannot withhold from myself the pleasure of scribbling a few lines of thanks for the extreme trouble you have had upon my account which is only exceeded in degree by the pleasure & information I have derived from your communication I rejoice exceedingly to observe that the french Mss bear so strong a similarity to Our Thomas, especially as the prose Romance abridged by Monsr Tressan<sup>1</sup> is even in the Outline a totally different story interwoven with the popular history of King Arthur & his Round Table The French metrical tale possesses much beauty both of Incident & diction in spite of the

<sup>1</sup> Louis Elisabeth de la Vergne, Comte de Tressan (1705-83) The abridgement of *Flores et Blanche Fleur* appears in his *Corps d Extraits de Romans de Chevalerie* (1782), tome 1, pp 218 292 As the English rendering in the Auchinleck MS consisted of 850 lines only, Ellis completed his specimen from Tressan's abridgement See Ellis's *Specimens*, III, pp 101-2, and *A L C*, p 112 See also Scott's autobiographic fragment (*Lockhart*, chap 1) for his familiarity with "Tressan's romances" and Bibliothèque de Romans during his schooldays



heathenish obscurity of the Language I think it seems to be much more artificial and minute than that which is in our Ms an additional argument for supposing that Thomas was the original author, & that the Frenchman amplified & ornamented the materials which he derived from the Bard of Erceldoun I congratulate you upon <sup>1</sup> In the midst of this scene of motley confusion I long like the hart for water brooks for the arrival of your grande opus If it is yet time to alter its mode of conveyance I should much prefer to have it sent per the Mail Coach for independent of Eolus & all his stormy train there is a certain Citoyen Blankman <sup>2</sup> a gentle hint from whom has altered the destination of certain *smacks* much to the displeasure of passengers & crew —The nature of your researches animates me to proceed in mine (tho' of a much more limited & local nature) even as upon sharpeneth iron I am strongly inclined to subscribe to your conception of *Ermony* Menavia (latinised from *Menaw*) is I believe the name given by Bede to the islands of Man & Anglesea indiscriminately known also by that of Mona The Menavia towards which Erming street run[s] is the Menavia Secunda, the Mona of Cæsar, & our modern isle of Man Now we all know that *Er* or *Ar* signifies *terra* in the Celtic languages *Ar*=*morica*—the land sea *Ar*=*lamont* in Cantire, the land of the *Lamonts* <sup>3</sup> By the same rule *Er mony* should signify the land opposite to Menaw or Mona<sup>4</sup> & thus the Dominions of Rouland Ruis would

<sup>1</sup> For the omitted sentences of this letter see Vol I, pp 114 5 On the relation between *Hrolf Kraki* and similar Celtic stories see G H Maynardier, *The Wife of Bath's Tale* (1901), pp 17 20, 47 9

<sup>2</sup> That is, a French privateer

<sup>3</sup> On Armorica (properly "the land by the sea") Cf F N Robinson, *The Works of Chaucer* (1933), p 827, E Brugger, *Modern Philology*, xxv, 286 Arlamont is more correctly Ardlamont, "Height of Lamont"—J B Johnston, *Place Names of Scotland* (1934), p 86

<sup>4</sup> E Brugger defends the Scottish localities of Ermonie and Almayne in *Modern Philology*, xxv (1927 8) and xxvi (1928 9) See also J S Stuart Glennie's *Arthurian Localities* in H B Wheatley's *Merlin* (E E T S, Vol I 1899)

form a part of Westmoreland & Cumberland, in short it would establish him as a chief of the Cwmraig to whom from his very name we may be inclined to refer him. There is only one objection to this pretty hypothesis, namely, that upon concluding the truce with Duke Morgan Rouland is said to have *fares to Inglande to lende*, in short to have saild to England which at first may seem inconsistent with the geography of his supposed Kingdom. But observe it was to Cornwall to which he directed his course & a single glance at the map will suffice to shew that his easiest and shortest passage to that country must be by sea. The land possest by the Angles was probably already distinguishd from that in the hands of the Aborigines by the term of Ingland. Observe also the arrival of the trading vessell *from Norway* which seems most likely to have touchd at the western side of the Island. All these are *but* conjectures yet I do not despair to work some thing out of them—I am in utter despair about some of the hunting terms, there is no copy of Lady Juhana Berners work in Scotland & I would move heaven and earth to get a sight of it if possible<sup>1</sup>—But as I fear this is utterly impossible I must have recourse to your friendly assistance & communicate to you a set of doubts & queries which if any man in England can satisfy I am well assured it must be you. You may therefore expect in a few days to receive another epistle, in the mean while I shall invoke the spirit of Nimrod. I hope at the same time to acknowledge the receipt of your valuable work for which & for all your undeserved favours I remain Your most faithful & obliged friend

W SCOTT

MUSSELLBURGH, 11 May 1801

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

<sup>1</sup> In an undated letter Ellis adds 'I *hope* I have sent you The Lady Juhana's excerpts on hawking & hunting. Heber's journey I know, has miscarried, but a friend of mine (Mr Blackburn) kindly undertook to convey it, and Heber promised, on his part, to send it to him in time'—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*. See Vol I, p 115, note 1. Blackburn is John Blackburn (1756 1840), a wealthy West India merchant in Glasgow.

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR SIR,—I have to acknowledge with my best thanks your two obliging favours the first covering the valuable extract from the Venerable Abbess of St Albans which sets me quite upon my legs as to the science & mysterie of Hunting I am now sorry your kindness has extended itself so far as to send down the original since I am certain you cannot fail to have discern'd & transcribed all that was likely to illustrate my subject—Now to Business—

Your explanation of *Henninges* qua *Hangings*<sup>1</sup> seems most satisfactory & perfectly agreeable to the mode of carving recommended by Lady Juliana—*Pride* is currently used for the *Spleen* by the Domestic butchers in Scotland & it is curious to observe that the former word is now only classical in the metaphorical sense while the latter continues indifferently to be used in anatomy & as expressing a moral feeling The *reed* is also vulgarly used to describe a part of the tripe For both of these explanations which only floated in my recollection I am indebted to my hind *Spande* he did not know yet I have a dark remembrance of having heard the word used—Noubles & Numbles are quite the same I suppose in transcribing the mark in Noubles has been omitted—I knock under to your Interpretation of the mode of fleshing the hounds on the quarre which I find confirm'd by a quotation from an ancient Ms in Struts Horda = Angel Cynnan<sup>2</sup> The hounds portion was certainly arranged upon or under the hide “*He tizt the maw on tinde*” Why he should tie the

<sup>1</sup> On 15th June Ellis had said ‘I cannot guess at the word *henninges* There is no trace of the word that I can distinguish in Saxon, Danish, Dutch, German, Gothic, French, Italian, Spanish, &c Is it possible that it can mean the *testicles*, quasi *hangings*? You will see the cause of my question in my extract from Lady Juliana Verse 7 These, I know, are a great dainty, having frequently tasted them at the table of the late celebrated Duke of Orleans—they were indeed the only part of the hunted stag which he ever reserved for his own table”—MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

Joseph Strutt, *Horda Angel cynnan or a compleat view of the manners of the Saxons till the reign of Henry the Eighth, etc*, 3 vols (1775 6)

stomach is obvious—*on tunde* seems to be an adverbial expression the import of which I do not fully understand <sup>1</sup>

The beginning is uncommonly spirited—Ferembras according to your account is quite a different Romance from that of Ferragū in our Ms The latter is the Ferragū or Ferraū who makes such a figure in the Orlando Innamorato & Furioso—the Romance narrates a single combat betwixt him & Orlando—Both are invulnerable & maintain an obstinate duel which is varied by a long religious dispute—You will find the Death of Ferragū alluded to in the following sheets as a cause of Otuel's desire of encountering Roland—As for the Romance of Arthour & Merlin it seems to be much more complete than that which you mention as there are 45 folios after the destruction of Vortiger These are occupied in narrating the Birth & education of Arthur, his exploits and the adventures of the knights of the Round table if you wish for a transcript I shall cause it to be carefully made out for you after Otuel is finished as I should esteem myself most happy in contributing my mite towards *such a work in such hands* If any thing could have stimulated my zeal in your service it must have been the perusal of your first volume of Specimens which at once bears witness to the taste and research of the Author The copy with which you favoured [me] came safe to hand yesterday after having made I believe the Tour of half England I carry it into the Country with me for *bonne bouche* & shall trouble you with a long letter upon the subject unmixd with any baser materials till which time I remain ever Yours most faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 13 July 1801

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

<sup>1</sup> After "understand, for the sentences omitted see Vol I, pp 117 18 In an undated note Ellis writes "I think I have already mentioned to you that I possess the Romance of *Ferumbras* Is, or is not, *Ferumbras* identical with *Ferragu* ? Sir Otuel, as I believe I stated in my last exists here in MS in a very imperfect state —MS 873, *Nat Lib Scot*

To [GEORGE ELLIS]

MY DEAR SIR,—Having been for some weeks engaged in a *progress* thro' some of the wild corners of the South of Scotland I have been obliged to postpone the pleasure of acknowledging your two last favours till my return to a Land of pen & ink & post houses<sup>1</sup> I cannot sufficiently express my thanks for the invaluable continuation of Sir Tristrem which has cost you so much trouble that I am almost ashamed to think of it I shall certainly at least attempt something of a conclusion in poetry altho' the villainous cramp stanza of our Thomas almost scares me Something in the stile of the modern translation of King Athelstane<sup>2</sup> (which I admire very much indeed) might possibly answer, but would the world thank me for such verses as this<sup>3</sup>

þe compangzons fiftene  
To dede doþ he þring  
And stervey bidene  
þo Tristrem þe zinge  
Ac Tristreme haþ tene  
His eld wounde him wring  
For stoundes also kene  
Unto hostel he ging  
In hre  
Fele saluen þai bring  
His pain to recure

<sup>1</sup> On 3rd August Ellis had written "I have to thank you for the *whole* transcript of Sir Otuel but, alas! not one line have I received under your own hand, even to tell me that you had received the four sheets (containing 72 verses) of Sir Tristram!"—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>2</sup> John Hookham Frere's *Metrical Version of an Ode on Athelstan's Victory From the Saxon* See Ellis's *Specimens of English Poetry* (1801), vol 1, pp 32 4, and *The Works of Frere* (1874), vol 11, pp 41 3 Like Scott's, it is an attempt in Middle English

<sup>3</sup> On the 25th Ellis replies "If you seriously ask what the world would say to such verses as those you send me, I answer that such of the world as deserve to see Sir Tristram would be extremely pleased with them, and that I, after seeing them, shall be *perfectly ashamed of your acquaintance*, if, after having thus proved the facility with which you can execute the task, you should, through mere idleness, neglect to complete it" Ellis advises that Scott should adopt David Macpherson's method of punctuation as supplied in his edition of Wyntoun's Chronicle

With the assistance of " Bidene " " Of yore " " In lede " " I wot & nouzt at werre " and all the other legitimate crutches which prop the hobbling stanza of the Minstrels it would be no difficult task to compleat the poem somewhat in Thomas' own stile but if it is expected that any thing like the graces of modern poetry can be introduced into such a sketch I fear it might be as well required that a modern dancing Master should open his Ball dressd cap-a-pie in Sir Tristrems armour However I will certainly make the attempt & communicate my success to you as soon as I have done so I agree perfectly that everything of this sort should be above board—I mean an avowd imitation By the Bye the verses to the Moon in the 3d V of the Specimens p 323 are claimd as modern by Miss Scott of Ancram<sup>1</sup>—they have much of the quaintness of the age in which you have judiciously placed them —The success of the Specimens give[s] some hope that good taste & learning are still struggling amid the inundation of German *anomalies*<sup>2</sup> with which we have been lately overwhelmd If I mistake not there will soon be a demand for a republication of some of our old & forgotten Bards who will owe to Mr Ellis the regeneration of their laurels I have been lately engaged in a disquisition connected with your elephants<sup>3</sup> respecting the origin of the Faeries of popular superstition & I think I have satisfied myself that they are the lineal descendants of the Northern Duerger or Berg-Alfen of the Saxons altho' the word *Faery* by which they are now more generally known than by the primitive title *Elf*, be unquestionably of

<sup>1</sup> " Heber did put me a little on my guard with respect to the verses to the Moon '—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot* 'To the Moon From an old MS — Ellis, *Specimens of the Early English Poets*, II, p 323

<sup>2</sup> " The invaluable works of our elder writers, I had almost said the works of Shakespeare and Milton, are driven into neglect by frantic novels, sickly and stupid German Tragedies, etc '—Wordsworth, Preface to *Lyrical Ballads* in A B Grosart, *Prose Works of Wordsworth* (1876), II, p 83

<sup>3</sup> For an explanation of this bye word, meaning to give support of a favourite hypothesis, etc, see Vol I, p 113 and note 1

Eastern Origin & this subject has drawn out to an essay of considerable length which is to be inserted in the Border Minstrelsy, as an Introduction to a singular faery Ballad —The greater [part] of my intended work is now printed & will be publishd early in winter the hopes of recovering some additional materials has been (added to laziness & professional avocations) the cause of the long delay which has taken place To return to our etymological researches—I now suspect *spande* to mean the shoulder-blade but I have not as yet procured sufficient authority for this opinion —I am infinitely obliged to Mr Douce for the trouble he has taken with the dark passage of Sir Tristrem I hope the mystery of woods will receive no little elucidation from his obliging exertions While I am on this subject I am sure you will excuse my mentioning that I cannot entirely accede to your ingenious conjecture regarding the word "*Huttock*" in the 1st vol of your work p 398 *Huttock* & *Huttockie* seems to be a diminutive formd from hut or hat in a manner very common in some provinces of Scotland particularly the western, thus we have *bittock* & *bittockie*, *lassok* & *lassokie* &c &c &c I therefore incline to think that Quintun Schaws head-gear had been a *small hat* instead of a *haut toque* One or two other trifling remarks I have to communicate when I can recover a little memorandm which I have made concerning them & very carefully mislaid You will be readily aware that while I have been busying myself in seeking out these *pauæ maculæ* I would have sufferd neither deference nor politeness to restrain me from a more extended criticism could I have found ground for such —The history of the Scottish language is involved in great difficultie[s] If we suppose with Pinkerton the Picts to have spoken a dialect of the Teutonic that no doubt would give us the ground work of lowland Scotch but not to mention other difficulties attending this opinion I think it is impossible to show that there are any Teutonick words in our dialect which may not be traced to

the Anglo Saxon,<sup>1</sup> whereas such must unquestionably have occurred had the Scottish been founded upon the language spoken by a separate Gothic tribe. The introduction of the French I take to have been coeval with the feudal system the terms of which are chiefly Norman. This letter will be attended by some sheets of Arthur beginning agreeable to your wish at the death of Vortiger. The Romance is very beautiful & has every now & then by way of Introduction to the several divisions of the story preliminary verses descriptive of the seasons of the year. It shall be regularly transcribed for you. I am happy to hear that *Alisaundre* advances but am thunderstruck at your expressing doubts as to Adam Davie<sup>2</sup> being the Author. I thought that was an affair fixed. There is in our Ms one sheet of *Alisaundre* being the conclusion of the romance, if you think it of consequence I can have it transcribed & forwarded to you. pray let me know if Mr Park<sup>3</sup> would wish to have it. The continuation of

<sup>1</sup> As to this opinion, Ellis writes on the 25th. I confess, though with great diffidence, that I should hesitate in adopting it even as to the English. I think I recollect in Ihre's glossary many roots of English words of which no trace is to be found in the Anglo Saxon or, to speak more modestly & more justly, in Lye's dictionary of the Anglo Saxon. Observe too that all our dictionaries give us the Saxon mixed with the Norse or Danish or whatever you please to call it, so that it seems difficult, at present, to get at the pure & genuine Saxon. — *MS 873, Nat Lib Scot* "Ihre's glossary" is Johann Ihre's *Glossarium Suogothicum, etc*, 2 vols (1769).

<sup>2</sup> Or Davy. "Kyng Alisaunder" was reprinted in *Metrical Romances* (1810), 1, by Henry Weber, who, in his Introduction (pp. xxi-ix), casts great doubt on attributing the poem to Davie and contents himself by thinking it the work of an anonymous author. But in his letter of the 25th Ellis maintains that the poem has been ascribed to Davie by Warton on the authority of Bishop Tanner who, however, 'does not give us any grounds for his assertion. He considers the poem is unquestionably as old as 1312' — "I judge however from internal evidence only. It is most beautiful." — *MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*. Later investigators have completely discarded Davie's claims. See *DNB*. Davie was a minstrel, who wrote c. 1312.

<sup>3</sup> Thomas Park (1759-1834), the antiquary and bibliographer. He was the means of bringing further recognition to Bloomfield and Kirke White and helped Brydges, Ellis, Ritson, and George Steevens in their work. His famous collection of books on old English poetry eventually passed into the hands of Longmans. Heber used to frequent Park's house in High Street, Marylebone. See *DNB*.



Sir tristrem altho I am ashamed to mention it will be a most grateful communication No news of Heber yet but according to our proverb he does not always ride when he puts on his boots —No man will be more well-come here I shall have a thousand questions to ask him about you your pursuits &c &c <sup>1</sup> Believe me ever Yours sincerely

W SCOTT

LASWADE COTTAGE 21 Augt 1801

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

DEAR SIR,—In order to redeem my sinking credit as a correspondent I must not delay acknowledging the Rect of the last Sheets of Sir Tristrem with your letter of the 25th I have sent the first Fytte of Sir Tristrem to press with an argument or rather a minute analysis of each stanza as you recommended I have also discarded the *p* as an unnecessary & inelegant incumbrance I retain however the *3* because as that commodious letter signifies *gh* or *y* or *g* & as there are one or two passages where there may be a dispute which of the conversions ought to take place I am willing to leave my readers to their own conjectures That confounded and confounding *3* has introduced much confusion in our spelling *Guild* hale for example is anciently spelld *Yelde Halle* so that the modern *G* may have been substituted for the *3* which is not uncommon unless we suppose the *gu* to have the power of *wh* as in the Spanish and indeed *gũ* seems to be the substitute for the *W* in various languages, the Scotch alone using the *qu* instead of *gũ* which after all may be only a difference in the mode of writing the *G* Upon this latter supposition Gueld would be pronounced

<sup>1</sup> On 18th July Ellis had written 'Our indefatigable Heber must be somewhere in England I believe he takes his flight Northwards about the beginning of next month'—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

*wheld* & easily softend into *Yeld*—So much for orthography—As to punctuation I promise faithfully to do my best but it is a subject I am not master of—notes of admiration, interrogation, etc shall be duly posted thro'out & the quotations accurately markd There seems propriety in dividing the poem into three fits or Cantos of nearly equal length In attempting the continuation I will do my best and unquestionably embrace your kind offer of submitting the whole to your criticism Spalla seems to me to have the same root with *epaule* anciently spelt *espaule* so is *perhaps* not of latin derivation In Scotch undoubtedly from the French we have in current use the words *spule* & *spauld* for the shoulder blade which makes me suspect that *spande* is of the same family—I am sure I have heard it used—These vile pict<sup>s</sup> <sup>1</sup> still disturb my slumbers I admit the weight of Pinkerton's arguments—but still—Galloway was you know a distinct tributary province during the reign of David 1st Its inhabitants are generally averrd to have been of Pictish origin—now if that fact *be* well authenticated down falls the whole system of Pinkerton for the Galwegians from their names, customs, & in short from every distinguishing mark which we can observe regarding them, were most unquestionably Celts It is true Pinkerton talks of an Irish colony of Scots settled in Galloway but I think this falls short of a satisfactory solution—My Border Ballads are now nearly

<sup>1</sup> In his letter of the 25th Ellis says 'As you observe, those confounded Picts are, notwithstanding the positive tone adopted by Pinkerton, very troublesome fellows I may however confess to *you* that I feel much more disposed to adopt his conjecture (for it certainly is no more) than that of Ritson" If one trusts to authority, that of Tacitus ought to have great weight, much more than "poetry, venerable Bedes &c &c", if to analogy — as the Gothic nations came from the East, they were likely to form an establishment on the Eastern coasts of Britain, particularly of North Britain which lies so near their own shores, at a very early period and it is I think very clear that the Picts are distinguished from the Scots as different *nations* not merely as *tribes*, because Tacitus, in mentioning the *novae gentes* found at the mouth of the Tay, seems to mean that their language was unintelligible to all the Guides whom Agricola carried with him"—MS 873, *Nat Lib Scot* See Scott's letter to William Gibb, 25th January 1828, Vol X pp 365, 366 and note, 367, and *The Antiquary*, Border Ed, I, chap vi, pp 73-6

completed only a small part of the second volume remains to be printed—I send a sheet of King Arthour which does not bring him quite the length of being begotten so his history proceeds still more slowly than that of Tristram Shandy—I am much interested about the Romance of Sir Eger & Sir Grime to which Scotland seems to have some claim at least it was a very popular romance here in Sir David Lindesay's days Have you met with another frequently quoted and referred to by Scotch authors call'd *Graysteil* I had once some notion that the stories were the same but was undeceived by Bishp Percy who gave me some account of Sir Eger from his folio Ms <sup>1</sup> The tune of Graysteil seems to have been popular so late as the end of last Century for I have seen a Sort of Burlesque elegy upon the Marqs of Argyle printed 1686 which is directed to be sung to the tune of old Graysteil I wish you could unearth this old Romance Sir Grime is I believe a Native of Carrick in Ayrshire—It is very remarkable that all the heroes of chivalry seem to be from the Celtic corners of the country Bretagne Cornwall Galloway Carlisle Ayrshire all are or have been exclusive possessions of the Celts, not to mention Wales from which alone we derive such a cloud of worthies

I am now upon a subject very interesting to us all I mean the antiquity of the Edinr Ms which I feel strongly inclined to pronounce to be as early as Edward 3d My reasons are these 1 A metrical Chronicle of the Kings of England near the end of the volume concludes with the death of Edwd 2d a subject which he passes over very slightly & then prays

Now Thū crist & Seyn Richard  
Save the 3ong king Edward  
And 3if him grace his lond to 3eme &c

2dly There is a long satire agt Simony which mentions many circumstances which seem solely referable to the

<sup>1</sup> See note to letter to Percy, 6th October 1800, p 167

reign of Edwd 2d Such is the succession of Seasons alluded to in the poem—A dearth—followd by a plentiful harvest & that again succeeded by a murrain among cattle and by a second famine, all which I believe you will find to have taken place in 1314 & the following years The civil wars & foreign defeats are also mentioned by which the calamitous reign of Edwd 2d was in a special manner afflicted

The dress of the gentry also

An nū þer is no squier of þrus in þis middel erd  
 But if þat he bere a babel & a long *þerd*  
 And swere godes soule & vowe to god al hote  
 But shuld he for euerich fals with lose kirtel and kote  
 al neue

He sholde stond naked twyse a day  
 or eue

Gods soule is alday sworn þe knif stant astrout  
 And pouh the botes be lorn yet wole he makken it stout  
 þe *hode* hangeþ on his brest as he wolde spewe þerin &c

Do not these particulars of dress apply specially to the reign when

*Long bearded heartlesse*  
*Painted hoods witlesse*  
*Gay cotes gracelesse*  
*Made Englande thriftlesse*

I have several other circumstances of proof but I wish to have your opinion of these <sup>1</sup> There is not I think in the whole book a poem or Romance later than Edwd 3d

<sup>1</sup> On 8th September Ellis writes that, though anxious to accede to Scott's opinion, "I will, for a moment, fancy myself a Ritson or some other Antiquarian infidel & furnish you with *one* objection which *he*, I am sure, will not fail to adduce While Ellis agrees with Scott's first and second points, he thinks he might have added that Sir Tristram "is, even by Ritson's own admission, of still higher antiquity" As it cannot be proved that the MS is the work of one author, and as, indeed, the MS is mainly a series of transcripts from other MSS, or from the dictation of minstrels, "Ritson will tell you that the antiquity of *each piece* must rest on its own individual proofs, and that of the *volume* on the *orthography & mode of writing*" While inclined to concur in the opinion that there is not a poem or romance in the book later than Edward 3d, its truth is not evinced, I think, by the quotations you have given Your men of Galloway do not annoy me so much as

I am anxious you should include among your Romances, one call'd Roswal & Lilian<sup>1</sup> my reason is that it is the last metrical Romance of Chivalry which retain'd popularity in Scotland & indeed was sung in Edinr within these 20 years by a sort of reciter in the streets I can send you a modern copy—the Duke of Roxburgh has a black letter Copy of some antiquity Valentine & Orson is the last prose Romance which kept its ground with the common people—Still no news of Heber—Ever Dear Sir Yours most sincerely

W SCOTT

[25<sup>th</sup> August-8<sup>th</sup> September 1801]

[Pierpont Morgan]

TO GEORGE ELLIS, ST JAMES PLACE, LONDON

[Extract]

MY DEAR SIR,—Since receiving yours I have been obliged to go to the Circuit which has delay'd my acknowledging it Upon my return I was agreeably surpriz'd by receiving a visit from no less a Man than Ritson himself who spent two days at my little Cottage You will readily

you The philosophical & rational mode of distinguishing nations by their *language* was never universally received, the Gallowegians therefore may have been a Celtic tribe formerly resident on the Eastern coast, & therefore called Picts like their neighbours You perfectly astonish me by your intelligence respecting Eger & Grim derived from Bishop Percy<sup>1</sup> Ellis has just transcribed these from a volume also containing 'Squyer Meldrum and Sir Bevis and 'printed at (Aberdeen?) in 1711 The diction of Sir Eger is *in general* rather *Scottish* than *very* antiquated,' proving it to have been modernised from an early copy He then outlines the story 'Now I can as little understand the process by which this Romance can have been so modernised and altered as to contradict your *'notion* that the stories of Sir Eger & Sir Graysteel were the same Pray tell me what Bishop Percy says, for I am upon tenterhooks upon the subject By the way, what a wonderful MS is his! Douce tells me that it is not of an earlier date than the reign of Charles I, & yet it contains copies, & apparently very *rare* copies of many of our most antiquated poems, many of which are scarcely to be found anywhere else! —MS 873 Nat Lib Scot

<sup>1</sup> See Ellis's *Metr Romances*, III, p. 371 ff "I have only seen a single copy of it, which was kindly communicated to me by Mr Douce It is in the Scottish dialect"

believe it gave me great pleasure to have an opportunity of consulting the most rigid of our British Antiquaries upon the publications with which I am threatening the world I was particularly desirous to give him every information in my power concerning the authenticity of my Border Ballads & I believe I succeeded perfectly in removing every doubt from his mind I showd him the book as far as printed & was gratified to find that the plan met his approbation—Our next point was an accurate examination of the Ms which I sent to Edinr for the purpose Ritson acquiesces in my opinion that it may be rationally ascribed to the time of Edward 3d from the appearance of the hand-writing & orthography as well as from the circumstance of its containing no Poem which can be proved to be of later origin than that period His opinion on this subject also gives me great pleasure In conformity to your opinion which was strongly backd by Ritson I have cancelld the sheet of Sir Tristrem which was already printed and have finally resolved to discard that same crooked 3 with all it[s] ambiguities & substitute in the place its modern representatives Y & Gh I do not observe that our Ms contains the Ð or ðð of the Saxons, the Theta is uniformly expressd by þ I know no two sounds that are more frequently exchanged for each other in all languages than the Th and D—I set forth upon the task of punctuation with all the resignation to divine providence which you recommend tho' with far greater reason to trust to your own discriminating powers

To come to Sir Eger & Sir Grime <sup>1</sup>

How can you be so *superfluous* as to ask any one whether you ought to publish the abregé of Turpin's history, of which the name alone is familiar to us & which will supply such curious food for speculation <sup>2</sup> Ariosto I presume &

<sup>1</sup> Here Scott recurs to his view that *Graysteel* and *Sir Eger* are the same romance, and goes on to give Percv's account of the poem in his manuscript

<sup>2</sup> Ellis's letter of 8th September tells us he contemplates printing an abstract of Archbishop Turpin's Chronicle as translated into French prose, & published in 1527 It *does* contain (and it is the most curious

Boiardo by whom he is so often quoted only knew him through the medium of the Romancers. You will be guilty of a heinous offence if you suppress the Archbishops legend & I am not sure that in strict justice to our own fabulous age you are not bound to do the same favour which you have bestowd upon Turpin to Geoffrey of Monmouth. These are the corner stones of the two principal Gothic edifices of Romance as far as the scene was laid in modern Europe, & you can I know with equal ease & ability trace out their outlines which in fact will save you the trouble of Tautology & repetition in sketching the different Romances which claim these works as their common basis <sup>1</sup>

Ritson having possessd himself of our Ms has interrupted the transcript of King Arthour which shall speedily be resumed. Heber has not yet been heard of on this side the Tweed. Believe me dear Sir Ever Your[s] faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

LASWADE COTTAGE 24 September 1801

[Cholmondeley]

To [GEORGE ELLIS]

[Extract]

I HEARD some time ago from [*MS cut off*] and Lady Anne Hamilton that you were likely soon to [chan]ge your situation in life & I now hasten to offer you by anticipation my warmest good wishes. The favour intended me by the Lady of your choice I do not know how to acknowledge sufficiently & I must trust to your powerful influence to express in the most respectful & energetic manner my sense of the trouble she has undertaken upon my account. The Ms of Sir Eger shall

chapter in the book) the battle between Roland and Ferragus, and I have some doubt whether *your* Ferragus can be much more entertaining than that of Turpin. Do you approve? Yea, or Nay? — *MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>1</sup> He goes on to discuss the meaning and etymology of "brief the Bill and 'Haver Cake'"

certainly hold the most distinguishd place in my little Book-room

What you hint about Ritson grieves but does not surprize me<sup>1</sup> The short while he remaund here Leyden beset him so close with multifarious & many-tongued lore as to keep him constantly employd On my part (not to mention that I can repeat ballads like any *seannachie*) he found out I believe a tincture of Jacobitism which tho' rather an Instinct than a principle adopted from reason forms a frequent feature in the character of the animal call'd a thorough bred Scotsman Besides I had hereditary merit to plead—my great grandfather—(every Scotsman has a great grandfather) was *out* at Killicrankey & Sheriffmuir—fought a duel with a *whiggish* father in law—narrowly escaped the gallows—& finally died with a beard which would have done honor to any hermit because he had sworn never to shave till “the king came home” [All this was cal]culated to delight Ritson but alas! I fear [when he] comes to peruse some particular

<sup>1</sup> For the opening of Ellis's letter of 2nd October see Vol. I, p. 117 and note 2. Commenting upon Ritson's visit Ellis speaks of ‘the pleasure which you are doomed to enjoy by convincing the never yet convinced poetical antiquary After having softened the Arch enemy of your nation you have nothing to apprehend from other Sceptics, and, as Pinkerton cannot be so ungracious as to pick a quarrel with Ritson on such a point, the Antiquity of our MS (I call it *ours* from having participated so largely in its contents) is for ever established He sends congratulations that Ritson's visit has had a friendly termination Not so his long and amicable intercourse with poor Douce!’ Ritson thought he had detected on the features of ‘his tranquil & unsuspecting friend symptoms of manifest disaffection to himself & all his pursuits The unfortunate result was that he would never taste another drop of tea in Douce's house, never commune with him in the Museum reading room, never even exchange with him the common forms of civility and they are now separated by an ‘Oceanus dissociabilis as effectually as Menou from Cairo, or Bonaparte from Sir Sydney Smith!’ That our Antiquary's trans Tweedan excursion, which will doubtless be pregnant with the most beneficial consequences to literature, may not produce such a tragical termination is the sincere wish of,’ etc—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot* To Heber on 14th February 1802 Leyden writes I shall only give you one hint concerning Ritson, and it is this I am by no means afraid of him after having seen him You sent down to Scotland your old Lion—Walter Scott and I pared his claws and drew his teeth and returned him upon your hands a perfectly tame and domestic animal —*MS 939 Nat Lib Scot*



parts of [the] poems he will resume the scalping knife Unless my physiognomical art greatly [deceives me] I should suspect our celebrated Antiquary of [being] influenced a good deal by that caprice which distinguished Rousseau & which in men of active & vehement minds is sometimes nearly allied to insanity

I send you another sheet of Arthour of which I hope soon to make out the compleat transcript—head Courts weapon-shawing &c &c have proved frequent interruptions to the labours of the pen during this vacation I go to town on Wednesday next as Mrs Scott is threatening to increase my family very soon When I am settled in Castle Street I intend to make up for lost time & I can also more easily have the assistance of my amanuensis Young Leyden Make no apology for requesting freely every assistance it is in my power to afford you myself or to procure from my more able friends It occurs to me that I have a transcript of several pages of Sir Gy from our Ms made many years ago It is among my papers in town & when I get there I will send it to you in order that you may compare it with your copy as far as it goes I have no earthly use for it so that you may keep it as a sample of our Sir Gy <sup>1</sup> The minstrelsy of the Scotch border will I think soon salute—not *your* hands—but those of the fair Transcriber of Sir Grime Sir Eger & Sir Graysteel <sup>2</sup> The third volume for which I have copious materials shall not be publishd unless the two now printing meet in some degree the taste of the public Thomas Campbell author of the Pleasures of Hope is about to publish an edition of his works for his own emolument & by subscription He is a real poet—poor & imprudent—I wish you would authorize me to put down your name for a copy If a small sum could be realised for him he might get into some line of active exertion for though

<sup>1</sup> In some mutilated sentences he asks Ellis to compare *Sir Tristrem* with the poem of the French minstrel in Douce's MS See Introduction to *Sir Tristrem*, p. 21

Mrs Ellis The 4 LC (p. 103) attributes these copies to her husband

poetry is a very pretty amusement yet I am afraid we must class it with fire & water which according to our Scottish proverb are good Servants but bad Masters <sup>1</sup> I am compleatly agreed with you that Saxon authorities form a *desideratum* in our history but I am unable to afford you any assistance Here we have nothing but printed Books and those not always accessible <sup>2</sup> You are in the land of Mss & of unexplored authorities & it is southwards we must look for every thing like certain written proofs of historical fact Setting aside the destruction of our records which I suspect has often been made an apology for our having none, our poverty our ignorance & our barbarism are sufficient reasons for the scarcity of Scottish Mss of an early date Charters of an early date are seldom found in the possession even of our oldest families As late as the minority of James V the Laird of Buccleuch being asked by what title he held certain possessions in Ettrick forest claimed by the Queen Dowager as her jointure lands could only produce his broadsword as the Charter by which he & his forefathers held their estate—Of tradition & popular antiquities we have indeed enough & to spare Once more success & happiness attend you & believe [me] ever Yours faithfully

W SCOTT

LASWADE COTTAGE 9th October

(Im sure Im right now) 1801 <sup>3</sup>

[*Cholmondeley*]

<sup>1</sup> Some badly mutilated sentences follow

<sup>2</sup> For the opening of Ellis's reply of the 14th see Vol I, p 118 note After saying he will subscribe to Campbell's intended work he goes on it is impossible not to agree with you & all mankind on the subject of the Muses & equally impossible not to compassionate those who have been seduced to keep such bad company <sup>1</sup> Your pleading ignorance respecting Saxon documents drives me to despair as I had trusted to you as my sheet anchor How comes it that early history is so scarce in a country where the respect for old families is carried so far, in a country where Romance once flourished, and where the spirit of Romance & the spirit of poetry has descended in a regular filiation from the bard of Erceldoun & Barber to Robert Burns & Walter Scott? —*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>3</sup> See Vol I, pp 117 18 note 2 Ellis has received from Scott on 29th September a letter dated 24th October

To [GEORGE ELLIS]

MY DEAR SIR,—You would receive in course two packets of Merlin Young Leyden is once more at work & will continue to labour till all your demands upon the Auchinleck Ms are amply satisfied The author repeatedly refers to the Brut for his authority & as he occasionally terms it the Romaunce I presume he means Wace's translation of Geoffrey This however is uncertain Nothing I believe in Geoffrey exactly corresponds in detail to the story of our Romancer but you will find a most accurate analysis of his work in the *Bibliothèque de Romans* for Juillet 1775 The work of which this analysis professes to be the *extrait* is stated to be a Romance called Merlin in two volumes containing all the events of the life of that famous enchanter, jusques a sa magique disparition <sup>1</sup> Of course the authority of the Editors of the Bibliothèque must have been in *prose* but it probably had a french metrical original as most of the prose Romances were as Bayes has it *transp[ro]sed* <sup>2</sup> If that metrical original is in existence I fear it will prove our English Romance to be a mere translation which will hardly suit the stomachs of the Elephants Thus far is certain that the incidents narrated in the *Extrait* & those of our poem are not generally but identically the same, only that the English Romance does not carry down the history of Merlin to his magical disappearance but stops rather abruptly at the marriage of King Arthur to

<sup>1</sup> "Le précis que nous venons d'exposer, est l'abrégé fidèle des deux volumes du Roman intitulé *le Livre de Merlin*, qui comprend tous les événements de la vie fabuleuse de cet Enchanteur, depuis sa naissance surnaturelle, jusque à sa magique disparition"—*Bibliothèque Universelle des Romans*, Juillet, 1775 Premier Volume, p. 134 As to this Ellis, in his letter of the 27th, has no doubt of its "having been *transposed* from an older metrical one, the immediate original, probably, of our Merlin In short I believe that the Norman Minstrels learned *here* (or rather with you) the stories which they embellished, and that their poems, so embellished, were translated into the Anglo-Norman or English, & furnish some of the earliest existing specimens of that language —MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

<sup>2</sup> See Buckingham, *The Rehearsal* (second ed 1675), Act I, sc 1, p. 4, and Dryden's *Absalom and Achitophel*, Part II, line 444—For, to write verse with him is to transprose'—Scott Saintsbury ed (1884), ix, p. 362

Guenever As there is now a probability of intercourse with France perhaps you may be able thro some literary person in Paris to get some information concerning the metrical Romances in—Alas I was going to say the *King's* Library At any rate pray look at the bibliotheque de Romans Tom[e] imiere The cursed turn of the French for *Broderie* makes one suspect every thing that they narrate as from authority

I now send with two additional sheets of Arthour a packet of Sir Gy which is except perhaps Bevis of Hampton the dullest Romance of prius which I ever attempted to peruse<sup>1</sup> I think nothing but national prejudice could have elevated it to the situation of eminence in which it is placed by Chaucer, it may serve however to show in what an ineffable degree our Ancestors possesd the virtue of patience or at least how heavy their time must have hung upon their hands You will see at first glance how very new I was in Romaunce when I made the transcript of Sir Gy I have compared it with the original & corrected many blunders though some may still have escaped my notice Thro'out the transcript the Y is foolishly & injudiciously placed for the Saxon þ The modern pronoun I is also often placed instead of Y or Ich tho not uniformly You will weigh these injudicious alterations of a juvenile transcriber in estimating the antiquity of the Romance & make due allowance I have 40 pages more of this transcript to send you as soon as I have compared them with the original so you may expect a dropping fire of dispatches for some time to come There is another Copy of Sir Gy in the Auchinleck Ms beginning thus

## I

God graunt hem heven blis to mede  
þat herken to mi romaunce rede  
Al of a gentil kniȝt, etc

<sup>1</sup> On the 14th Ellis says he will gladly receive Sir Guy which, if not too long, he will print entire The merit of the story is not great—'it is more tedious than is allowable even to the stories of an age when from the great difficulty of spending time, prolixity was almost a moral virtue' —MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

This copy is a continuation of the former which had stopd at the death of the said dragon It is much better poetry than the first part & the circumstances of the duel betwixt Gy and Colbrand the Danish Giant display some animation & descriptive powers This passage I will certainly copy for you as I think it very worthy of being printed ad longum

Leydens complaint of Scotland<sup>1</sup> is at length publishd containing a vast variety of curious information which will not fail deeply to interest you as soon as it falls into your hands I am obliged to you for giving your countenance to Campbell his work is yet in Embryo & subscriptions need only be paid on delivery Indeed he is so unsettled that I shall not be greatly surprized if he alters his mind about the mode of publication

The Romance of Feragus in our Ms is I find a versified edition of a chapter of Turpins Chronicle entitled *de bello Ferracuti Gigantis et de optima disputatione Rolandi* The Latin version & the poem resemble each other even in the minute particulars It commences with a detail of Charlemagnes conquests in Spain not forgetting the circumstance of his efficacious prayers converting the obstinate city of Lucerne into a lake of fire and brimstone

My petition with regard to Tristrem is of a very general nature It cannot have escaped you that many circumstances are barely touchd upon by Tomas which according to the analysis of the French Romaunce with which you obliged me are there the subject of considerable detail Thus Tristrams disguise as a beggar during the time of his

<sup>1</sup> *The Complaynt of Scotland written in 1548 With a Preliminary Dissertation, and Glossary* [Edited by John Leyden] (1801) It is dedicated to Heber In his letter of the 27th Ellis expresses impatience to see this work "By the way, is it not extraordinary that neither the adventure of Sir Otuel nor that of Furàbras (or *Ferumbras* as my romance calls him) should be at all mentioned" in Turpin's Chronicle Ellis does not recollect anything in the French Tristram relating to Canados's reproaches When he can get at the two fragments, he will send Scott a regular abstract of them "Did I ever mention to you that Douce persists in thinking that his fragments are more ancient than your Sir Tristram?" He goes on to state Douce's arguments — MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

disgrace with Brangwin is obscurely hinted at in thes[e] words

Ganhardine gan fare  
 Into Bretaine oway  
 And Tristrem duelled pare  
 To wite what men wald say  
 Coppe & Claper he bare  
 Til þe fiftere day  
 As he a mesil ware  
 Under walles he lay  
 To liþe  
 So wo was Ysoude þt m̃ay  
 þat alle sche wald to wriþe

In this & such like passages the abruptness of the transition is such as to leave very much for conjecture which would be most materially directed and aided by what you so kindly offer me vizt an analysis of the two fragments in Mr Douce's collection. Indeed so obscure are some passages that I could hardly have pickd out the story without your former communications upon the subject. Of course it is totally unnecessary to detail the long speeches or descriptions of the French Minstrel since our Thomas in these points imitates the ancient Roman in brevity. But what will be most useful to me is such an account of the incidents as will enable me to point out where the French narration & that of our Bard appear to coincide. One would indeed be very desirous (were that possible) to show from one or two paralell passages that the *woof* if not the *warp* of the two poems was nearly the same. For example—Canados hearing Ysuelte sing a lay which had been composed by his rival Tristrem upbraids her in a most discourteous manner

Tristrem made a song  
 þat song Ysoude the sleiþe  
 And harped ever among  
 Sir Canados was neiþe  
 He seyð Dame þou hast wrong  
 For soþe who it seiþe  
 As oule & stormis strong

So criestou on heye  
 In herd  
 pou louest Tristrem dreye  
 To wiong pou art ylerd

Is there any thing in the French Romance resembling the diction of this passage? Thus my wishes & wants are of two kinds—One relates to the turn of the adventure which with your assistance I hope to make distinct and plain by an analysis of the contents of the two fragments. My second demand upon your goodness is that while looking over the sheets of Tristrem which shall be transmitted to you you would be so good as to point out any passages (should such occur) where the language of Tomas corresponds to the French expressions which of course I shall be anxious to print in the original. I intend also to print as authority the greater part if not the whole of the conclusion for which I have to thank your friendship.

My most respectful Compliments attend the fair Copyist of Sir Eger. The prospect of a visit to Sunnyhill will have no small influence upon my motions in Spring should circumstances at all encourage my looking towards London. Heber is not yet forthcoming. Ever faithfully Yours

EDINBURGH 22d Octr 1801

W SCOTT

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR SIR,—I fear you must long since have given me up as a most compleat monster of sloth & ingratitude notwithstanding the coals of fire which you have continued unremittingly to heap upon my head. But before entering upon the causes of my silence have the goodness to accept and to make acceptable to your Lady my very warm & sincere congratulation on your late union which I hope & trust will long continue the source of your mutual Happiness <sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For what follows, "My literary amusements as numbered," see Vol I, pp 123 4

The first *fyfte* brings us down to the death of the Morhault, the second to the marriage of Mark & the third concludes the work. These divisions are nearly of equal length and my intended supplement may be subjoind as an appendix. Besides the arguments of each stanza which will serve from their minuteness as a sort of Translation I intend also for the benefit of the uninitiated to prefix a prose account of the Story taken from your valuable communication & connected as you recommend by adopting from Tressan what may be wanting to compleat the Story.<sup>1</sup> What a pity it is that even the elegant & enthusiastic *Compte* was not divested of the national taste for *broderie*—I am not entirely satisfied (perhaps because I do not wish to be so) with Mr Douce's reasoning on the comparative antiquity of the french & English poems. One thing is clearly ascertained that both are posterior to the time of Thomas Rhymer who died previous to 1299 in which year his son sold the family inheritance to the Religious house of the Trinity of Soltra. Both poems seem to have equal claim to rank as productions of the 14 Century but there is this essential difference that my Philo-Thomas asserts himself to have been the contemporary of Thomas of Erceldoune & to have derived the story from the mouth of the original author, whereas the French minstrel seems to have lived at a period when various editions differing from that of Thomas had already become current among the *Diseurs* of the time. Add to this that it is more likely that a poem in English containing if not the *ipsissima verba* of the author,

<sup>1</sup> In an undated letter Ellis had suggested that Scott should prefix to Sir Tristram a prose analysis of the whole story, compiled from the Scotch Minstrel, the French one and the *transproser* or abridgement. "The very little you would have occasion to borrow from Tressan could not take off the *gusto* of such an analysis, and this ancient tale has been so bedawbed with modern embroidery that it would be a virtuous deed to furnish the friends of Chivalry with a sketch of it in its original purity. It is my duty to inform you that I spent much of the evening of my wedding day, and of the two following days, in reading, with my little wife, the *House of Aspen*', and that we are extremely delighted with it"—MS 873, *Nat Lib Scot*. See Vol I, p 124



at least as near an imitation as the transcriber could devise is more likely to come near the original than that of a foreign Minstrel who avowedly draws his materials from various sources as well as from the original story of Thomas. For it would naturally be some time before the story glided into France<sup>1</sup> & surely still longer before it became so popular as to afford matter for many varying editions. This is all doubtless hypothetical reasoning & subject to be overthrown by a precise proof that the language of the Frenchman is older than that of my copy but if such internal proof be not brought I think the express assestion of Philo-Thomas should have some weight. I believe I wrote to you that I had fixed the death of Thomas betwixt that of Alexr in 1286 (which event he is said to have predicted) & the date of his sons deed of alienation in 1299.<sup>2</sup> Indeed if we could trust Blind Harry who introduces him as co-temporary with Wallace<sup>3</sup> when

<sup>1</sup> "This indeed is true," Ellis remarks on the 14th, "but I never suspected that the French metrical Romance of which I sent you the abstract, or rather paraphrase, was written in *France* though written in *French*. Many such compositions were made in this country by French subjects of our Norman Kings." It may be presumed that William the Conqueror's Minstrels acquired their Celtic tales through a Saxon medium. Thomas probably spoke either Saxon or English, i.e. Anglo-Norman. "On the first supposition the French Romance may be anterior to that of your Philo-Thomas, but, on the latter, which I prefer, yours is likely to be of equal antiquity with the work of the Norman Minstrel." The style of Scott's "Tristram" points to its being not much anterior. "Your having so nearly fixed the date of Thomas's death is very curious & that date proves that Barber was, on your side of the Tweed, nearly as great a benefactor to the English language as Chaucer on this side. How very little do we understand the literary history of that period!" To please "the very few readers to whom such very old English is intelligible," Scott, in his continuation of Tristram, should adopt "a more modern phraseology & less uncouth stanza." I believe your memory deceives you respecting Sir Otuel. Having analysed the earliest *French translation* of Turpin (that of 1536) I did find *there* a sort of allusion to the story, but could not find any trace of it on referring to the Latin. With respect to the bridge of Mantrible you are perfectly right. It is Ferumbas, of which I have a transcript.—MS 873, Nat Lib Scot.

For the date of Thomas see J. A. H. Murray, *Thomas of Erceuldoune* (E. E. T. S., No. 61, 1875), pp. xv, xvi, and G. P. McNeill, *Sir Tristram*, (S. T. S., 1886) p. xlv.

<sup>2</sup> See *The Life and Acts of the most famous & valiant Champion, Syr William Wallace, etc.* By Henry "the Minstrel" (1620), The Second Booke, chap. iii, pp. 24, 6.

that heroe took arms in 1297-8, the year of his death might be precisely ascertaind—but I do not pretend to lean any weight upon such a broken reed Before I dismiss Thomas let me thank you particularly for the Lady Juliana's work which arriv'd very safely I was sorry your friend Mr Blackburn did not give me an opportunity of personally returning my thanks to him for the trouble he has taken in escorting the worthy old Abbess the confusion of my household prevented my seeking him out—I should esteem myself at all times most happy to shew any little civility in my power to any of your freinds whose curiosity may lead them to our Northern capital I fear however that the charms of the *Queen of the North* will be much less attractive to our *Suthron* freinds than they were before the avenues were open'd to Paris <sup>1</sup>—The Book of St Albans shall be taken the utmost care of and return'd by some very safe opportunity

I am very glad that Mrs Ellis & you have deriv'd any amusement from the House of Aspen " Should I ever again attempt dramatic composition (which is very unlikely) I would endeavour to model my composition after the genuine old English model The H of Aspen will I think never be publish'd, so that if you think it worth transcribing you are most welcome to a copy in case you have not one already

The publication of the Complaynt is delayed—Leyden had prefixed an epistle dedicatory to our friend Heber, which upon reperusal he thought was not executed in good taste and has altered it to a modest Inscription with which I for one am much better pleas'd <sup>3</sup>

With regard to the Romance of Sir Otuel, I rather incline to think that some allusion is made to it in the history of Turpin—but cannot be positive I am sure it is enumerated among the contents of a Northern saga

<sup>1</sup> By the treaty of Amiens For words omitted see Vol I p 124

<sup>3</sup> For next paragraph It is a work exertion in his favour see Vol I, p 124

call'd Sagan of Karlemagnuse—of which there is a short analysis in the Catalogue of the Stockholm Library given in Hickes Thesaurus<sup>1</sup>—I think Ferembras is also there mentioned as also Ferracute—The Saga must have been translated from the French original Pray is it not in the Romance of Fierabras that the tale of the *Bridge of Man-tible* occurs—The story is mentioned in the Complaynt of Scotland but Leyden could not find what was the Romance alluded to if my memory serves me it is certainly a part of the romance of the worthy Ferembras which had thus continued to be popular in Scotland from the reign of the Bruce down to that of Queen Mary—Mr Murray of Symprim<sup>2</sup> is now here & going soon to his seat near Meikle in Strathmore I intend to commission him to procure an accurate drawing of the several monuments which I formerly described to you as existing in the churchyard of that village and supposed to mark the grave of Queen Ganore the Guenever[e] of Romance When I can procure such sketches I will communicate them to you

Did I ever tell you that Ritson has a theory about Thomas perfectly distinct from ours He is inclined to suppose that the English Romance is the identical composition of the Bard of Erceldoune & that he talks of himself in the third person, a practice which he pledges himself to prove was by no means uncommon among the authors of his age I own I am not inclined, *pace tanti viri*, to plead my cause so very high His good humour has continued even to the extent of sending some little extracts from Nashe's, "have with you to Croydon"<sup>3</sup> & a

<sup>1</sup> *Linguarum Vett Septentrionalium Thesaurus Grammatico Criticus et Archaeologicus* Auctore Georgio Hickesio, S T P (1703) For an analysis of the *Karlamagnus Saga* see *Bibliothèque de l'école des chartes* (Paris), ser v, vol v, ser 11, vol 1

For Mr Murray of Symprim see note to letter to him, Vol I, p 26 Besides Symprim in Berwickshire he seems to have had an estate near Meikle in Perthshire For Queen Ganore's grave see letter to Morritt, Vol II, pp 97-8

<sup>3</sup> Scott probably means Thomas Nash's *Have with you to Saffron Walden* (1596)

long Ballad call'd the gallant Grahams<sup>1</sup> By the way I have picked up an ancient legendary tale by a curious accident A friend of mine<sup>2</sup> son in law to the late Lord Monboddo in talking of the late Lord Arbuthnot, a weak & worthless character, told me that an old Nurse who had long resided in the family of Arbuthnot came to Monboddo one morning all in tears & told my friend that the Viscount in one of his fits of drunkenness had thrown out of the window the sword of Hugh le Blond<sup>3</sup> the great Ancestor of his family upon the preservation of which that of their estate was supposed to depend, the tradition having been that the lands of Arbuthnot were won by Sir Hugh for defending in single combat the virtue of the Queen of Scotland The good old nurse added that when she heard the doleful tidings she hastend to the castle to preserve the sword of Sir Hugh le Blond till as she said the young Laird should come to his ain, but alas<sup>1</sup> it had fallen into the hands of a sacrilegious smith who had beat it into a saw She then repeated the song of Sir Hugh le Blond, which, at my request, Mr Burnet has since caused to be transcribed for me The prophecy as to selling a part of the estate occasion'd its own accomplishment, for the Viscount had begun to entertain that intention when he threw away the Palladium which seemed to upbraid him for the dilapidation of his Inheritance This incident will give you some idea how many traditions must be preserved in Scotland if one had grace given them to find out the old women who are the faithful depositaries of these valuable remnants

By this time your patience must surely be exhausted

<sup>1</sup> 'I congratulate you Ellis writes on the 14th, 'on Ritson's making patte de velours to you after having scratched all his other friends with his talons As to his opinion concerning Thomas, it is I think a stronger symptom of obstinacy than of acuteness —MS 873, Nat Lib Scot For The Gallant Grahams see *Border Minstrelsy* (ed Henderson 1902), II, p 227

K Williamson Burnett of Monboddo, for whom see Vol VII p 77 note 2

<sup>3</sup> For 'Sir Hugh le Blond see *Border Minstrelsy*, ed Henderson, vol III, pp 59 74 Arbuthnot House is in Kincardineshire near Monboddo

Charlotte joins me in best & most respectful Compliments to Mrs Ellis—Great will be our joy when circumstances will permit our paying our personal respects to her—Believe [me] ever Dear Sir Yours very faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 7 Decr 1801

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

[2d January 1802]

MY DEAR SIR,<sup>1</sup>—The Christmas Vacation has permitted young Leyden to resume his transcript which I hope will be now speedily brought to a conclusion I would have had it continued by another hand while he was engaged with his classes but I found it would be more difficult to train another amanuensis to work upon the Ms than I had expected Leyden Senior has now changed in some measure his plans of going out to India & intends to take medical degrees here with a view of getting a Surgeon's appointment which will insure his passage to the East without preventing his being attached to the Academical Institution should that project finally go forward I should suppose that this view is not very unreasonable as it may require more Interest to get him tackd to the Institution in the very outset than<sup>2</sup> would get him a Surgeons appointment

I acquiesce in your observation regarding the French Version of Sir Tristram which after all was probably made at the Court of some of your Norman Monarchs Thomas of Erceldoune must himself unquestionably have spoken English, i e lowland Scottish, whether you suppose that to have been introduced amongst the Southern Inhabitants of Scotland from England by the conquests of the Saxons & by the number of Saxon

<sup>1</sup> Lockhart omits this letter, which is here printed for the first time  
<sup>2</sup> Young Leyden, mentioned by Scott, is John's brother, Robert Leyden

<sup>3</sup> "That" written, we amend

families who fled there from the face of the Conqueror, or whether you suppose it to have been a modification of the ancient Pictish language. Come how it will it must I think have been the language of Tomas, whose surname of the Rymer is of Gothick derivation<sup>1</sup>. He appears also to have been the friend of the De Hagas or Haigs of Bemerside a family of Saxon or Danish descent, & of Corspatrick of Dunbar who seems also to have been of English or Saxon origin. But it is possible that Tomas may have understood the Celtic—he did not live above three miles to Eastward of the Catrail. A singular passage occurs in Blind Harry tending to show that the English were wont to jeer even the lowland Scotch on account of the Gaelick language. Unfortunately the gibberish which the Suthron uses in addressing Wallace is so corrupted as not to be intelligible. Wallace as being an Ayrshire man might be particularly obnoxious to this insult but there can [be] no doubt that his own language was what we now call Lowland Scottish as Wintown gives us a sample of it in his scolding bout with the Inglis man in Lanark in which both seem to have been nearly equally masters of what we would now call the Billingsgate dialect<sup>2</sup>.

By the way my Tomas perfectly explains the meaning of the passage in the French version concerning Tristrem

<sup>1</sup> On 5th January Ellis though not denying this, would like it explained. Hitherto it has been supposed he was called *the Rymour* as we should say *the poet*. Macpherson has told him the family name was Rymer and he was called *the Rymer* as possessor of the family estate and head of the clan.

But what is the Gothic root of this name? Ellis considers Scott's observation about the images is a flash of light, and then quotes these original French lines

‘Et quant ils erent à suur,  
Dunc en alerent en bostages (boscsages),  
Pur ve er les belles ymages  
As vmages se delitoient,  
Pur les dames que tant amoent ’

He thinks this clearly alludes to the sculptures which caused Ganhardin's passion and which he as well as Tristram, would revisit with pleasure —  
*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

Cf next letter to Ellis and note, p 214

& Ganhardin's going while in Brittany to visit the images. It appears that Tristrem when he overcame the great giant Beliagog, imposed upon [him] the task of constructing a great hall filled with the most lively & beautiful pieces of sculpture representing all the Incidents in the amours of Tristrem & Ysoude. It was in this wonderful place that Ganhardin saw the statue of Brengwain & became enamoured of her & I have no doubt that these sculptures are the Images of the Norman or Anglo Norman Minstrel.

The post is just going off—Mrs Scott joins in kindest respects to Mrs Ellis. Yours ever faithfully

W S

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

EDINR 8 *Jany* 1802

MY DEAR SIR,—Your favour of the 5 January arrived just as I was sitting down to write to you with a sheet or two of Sir Arthour<sup>1</sup>. I mention these circumstances that you may know exactly in what way to interpose your good offices in poor Leydens behalf—

As to our friend Thomas I am strongly induced to accede to Mr Macphersons opinion notwithstanding the universal which avers his name to have been *Learmonth*. In the charter which I mentioned to you he is called Thomas Rymor de Erceldoune, his son on the contrary is simply termed Thomas de Erceldoune. I have mislaid a curious note I had concerning the derivation of this Word but I promise it to you in my next.

Now as to our Scoto-Celtick Bards<sup>2</sup>. Concerning Merlin

<sup>1</sup> For a few sentences from this letter which follow see Vol I, p 125

<sup>2</sup> On 5th January Ellis quotes Jones, the historian of the Welsh bards, as saying that Aneurin “lived under the patronage of Mynvdawg of Edinborough, a prince of the North, whose *Mylywyr* or men at arms were slain, excepting Aneurin & two others, in a battle with the Saxons at *Cat-trath*. Is not this identical with your *Catrail*?” about which he is most anxious to have further information, as he is more than ever convinced

the Wyld we have many traditions in which he is sometimes identified with Merlin Ambrosius the freind of Arthur & sometimes (I think more frequently) represented to us as a different personage. He was buried at Drummelzier in Tweeddale twenty miles west of the Catrail & his grave is still shewn in the Churchyard of that place. You will find many particulars regarding him both in the Minstrelsy of the Border & in Leydens Introduction to the Complaynt—He is said to have been deprived of his senses in the course of a dreadful conflict fought betwixt Liddal probably the river so calld & Carwanolow (perhaps Carlanerick). I do not know any traditions regarding the battle of Cattraeth<sup>1</sup>. The perpetual mention of Caerlisle in all the ballads regarding Arthur together with what is calld his Round Table, a circular intrenchment near Penrith where it is said Tournaments were solemnized, tend much to strengthen your hypothesis regarding the Cambrian or Scoto-Celtick origin of his history. The Traditions concerning the Catrail<sup>2</sup> are very vague & obscure but one old Man expressly affirmd it to be the boundary betwixt the Peghts & the Bretts. Others say it was the work of the Dæmons under the direction of Sir Michael Scot a Wizard of whom they tell many strange stories. When I go to Selkirkshire in Spring I will make a more accurate survey of the rampart than I have hitherto done. The farm in which it [is] most easily distinguishd takes perhaps from that

that the principal materials of Arthur, Tristram, Gawain and Ywain were collected, not in Armorica, but in the provinces comprehended in or adjoining to what is now called Scotland." Jones tells us that Merlin the Wild "was born in Scotland —MS 873, *Nat Lii Scot*. See G. H. Maynardier, Merlin and Ambrosius in Kittredge's *Anniversary Papers*, pp. 119-126. Etymological connections between Drummelzier and Merlin are highly improbable. See Glennie's *Arthurian Localities*, in *Merlin* Vol. I, (E. E. T. S.), p. lxxii, and Scott's letter to Ellis, 25th May 1803, pp. 234-5.

<sup>1</sup> For traditions of the battle of Cattraeth see W. F. Skene, *The Four Ancient Books of Wales* (1868), vol. II, pp. 360-8 and *passim*. For Carnwanolow see Glennie, *op. cit.*, pp. lxxxiv-lxxxvi.

<sup>2</sup> See J. B. Johnston, *op. cit.* p. 130, and J. Logan Mack, *The Border Line* (1926), pp. 162, 195-8.



circumstance the name of the *Rink* <sup>1</sup> I believe Merlin is the only one of the four Bards of Britain whose memory has survived among the common people, a pre-eminence which like Thomas he owes to his supposed prophetic powers. The same small collection originally published by Andro Hart in 1615 contains the Rhymers pretended prophecies & those delivered by Merlin the Wyld to one Waldhave,<sup>2</sup> perhaps Waldevus an Abbot of Melrose—

The passage in my Blind Harry is in 2d Ch. 2d Book where Wallace is insulted by the English in the street of Lanark. They insult the Champion by addressing him in French affecting to take him for a foreigner & then pretending to discover their mistake the spokesman adds

Since ye are Scots yet salust shall ye be  
Good even *Dauch lard, bath louth banzoth a de* <sup>3</sup>

Winton narrates part of this conversation but without the Gaelick. He was probably Henry's authority, but the passage tends to shew that in the days of the Minstrel the talking Celtic was a circumstance with which the English might be supposed to insult the Scots and of consequence that the language was not in such utter disuse even in the lowlands as we have been usually led to suppose.

I will most certainly extract for you the combat of Gy with Colbrand. It is told in the same stanza with the rhyme of Sir Thopas whereas the first part of Sir Gys history is in couplets. And now my dear Sir give me leave to

<sup>1</sup> For Rink Hill see Vol. VIII, p. 240 and note.

<sup>2</sup> See J. A. H. Murray, *op cit*, pp. xxxvii–xxxix. “The prophetic of Waldave is in fine alliterative measure, reminding one in its commencement of *Piers Plowman*.”

“Upon Loudon Law alone as I lay  
Looking to the Lennox &c.”

<sup>3</sup> Scott's quoted lines occur in the Sixth Book, vol. 1 of the edition issued at Perth, 3 vols. (1790), where (p. 120) they run

‘Sen ze ar Scots, zeit salust sall ze be  
*Gud deyn, Dauch Lard, bath louth banzoth a de*”

See also J. Mour's edition (S.T.S. 1889), p. 114, notes on ll. 132 and 140, and p. 410.

impose a piece of trouble upon you Will you commission any of your literary freinds to procure for me an accurate & distinct transcript of an old poem quoted by Warton<sup>1</sup> Vol 3 p 149—and marked thus Mss Cott JUL V folio 175 Pergament The first line is

“Als Y yod on a Mondaye betwene Wittingdone & Walle ”

Perhaps Heber can get this done for me I am very curious to see this old poem as it seems to be the original of one of our Scotch popular Ballads There is another Ms in the Museum of which I should like to have some general account It is a prose Chronicle of England from which Ritson quotes a passage in his ancient songs *Mss Harl* 266<sup>2</sup> I should like to know if it is of any value as I think I have found a copy of it—I am just returnd from the hospitable halls of Hamilton where I have spent the Xmas The Ladies have very much taste which they show in admiring the Specimens & wishing to know Mr Ellis—If you meet them in London in Spring you must be acquainted with them Mrs Scott joins in best respects to Mrs Ellis & I am ever Yours faithfully

W S

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been silent but not idle<sup>3</sup>  
I shall therefore desire him to transmit to Mr Nicol a

<sup>1</sup> *The History of English Poetry, etc* By Thomas Warton, vol iii (1781) A footnote to the poem on p 149 observes ‘ The transcript is not later than the year 1300 ’

<sup>2</sup> The passage in question is as follows “ An old chronicler, speaking of the battle of Halidon Hill, in this reign [Edward III], observes, that ‘ the Englishe mynstrals blew hie trumpes and hir pipes, and hidously astrede the Scottis ’ —Ritson, *Ancient Songs, etc* (1791), p xiii See a later letter to an unknown correspondnet (p 384) “The Brut of England or the Chronicles of England, in the various forms of its French, Latin and English versions, is preserved in some 167 MSS J E Wells, *Manual of the Writings in Middle English 1050 1400* (1923), p 206 For the MS to which Scott refers see *Catalogus Librorum MSS Bibliothecae Harleiana* 266, and again 1568 with the quaint notes there

<sup>3</sup> For the omitted sentences of this letter see Vol I, pp 132 3

parcel containing a set of the Ballads which I hope Mrs Ellis will honor by her acceptance and a copy of the Complaynt with which I think you will be highly pleased—to these I add the concluded transcript of King Arthour I presume Nicol will know some clever mode of sending you this budget of legendary lore I am sure you will rejoice with me at Leyden being put into a situation of Independence

This Letter has now lain a week by me & I am too lazy to begin a new one I hope by this time the Minstrelsy has reachd you & I need not add with what impatience I shall expect your remarks upon that collection in which after all I fear you will find yourself greatly disappointed Leyden's destination is Madras & he must sail abt the 24th March As this must greatly hurry and derange his literary plans we have applied to the Board for 6 months delay a favor which is sometimes granted & the more easily as nobody has any Interest to oppose it<sup>1</sup> If this delay cannot be obtaind go he certainly must *coute que coute* Believe me in great haste Sincerely Yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 14 *feby* 1802<sup>2</sup>

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

<sup>1</sup> Leyden did not sail for India till the middle of April 1803 In a letter he tells Heber that Scott is engaged in the purchase of an estate (that is *entre nous* however) and a considerable deal of his father's property is at the issue of law —MS 939, *Nat Lib Scot*

Of a letter to Ellis of 2nd March, 1802, Lockhart prints the portions relevant to a biography See Vol I pp 137 8 The rest of the letter is taken up with an analysis of the romance of *Sir Gy* as Scott calls it, being *Guy of Warwick* as contained in the Auchinleck MS, which is hardly worth reprinting See Ellis's *Early English Metrical Romances* (1805), II In the Introduction to *Guy of Warwick*, Ellis says 'A most beautiful and perfect MS of this poem is preserved in the library of Caius college Cambridge (A 8), and another in the public library (More 690), but the most curious and antient are two fragments contained in the Auchinleck MS at Edinburgh, of which I have availed myself, as far as possible, in the following abstract' —pp 3-4 Scott tells the story in Ellis's humorous manner

## TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR SIR,<sup>1</sup>—I have been so very long your debtor that I hardly well know how to commence my acquittance. The truth is that I have waited week after week for the departure of my brother for London by whom I propose to return your Lady Juliana with my very best thanks for the use of it. It is you know usually the case that when folks are least anxious to acknowledge benefits, they are usually employd in reaping the advantages which accrue from them—So has it been with Caesar, for during my silence I have been ornamenting my Sir Tristrem with the greater part of your *precis* of M[r] Douce's fragments which seem to me to form the most valuable & curious illustration of Thomas' text & it will not a little surprize any well-judging antiquary to find a ffrench & British Romance upon the same subject & composed nearly about the same early period throwing light upon each other—Your favourable opinion of the Minstrelsy gives me pleasure indeed—*Laudari per virum laudatum* is indeed a greater treat than the applause of numbers can afford—It has animated me in my researches which have latterly been uncommonly successful—Leyden & I have just concluded an excursion of a week or two thro' my jurisdiction of Selkirkshire where in defiance of mountains, rivers & peat-Bogs Damp & Dry, we have penetrated the very recesses of Ettricke fforeste to which district if I have ever the happiness of wellcoming you, you will be convinced that I am truly the Sheriff of the "Cairn & the Scaur"—The principal result of our enquiries has been a compleat & perfect copy of "Maitland with his auld berd graie" referred

<sup>1</sup> A small portion of this letter has been woven into the text of Lockhart's *Life* and overlooked by the transcriber for me of the letters from that source. It is here reprinted entire with the exception of some extracts from the ballad of *Auld Maitland*, which is in the *Minstrelsy*. The genuineness of this ballad has been unduly doubted. See Edith C Batho, *The Ettrick Shepherd* (1927), pp 21 7, 169 79

to by Douglas in the Palace of Honor along with John the Reif & other popular characters & celebrated also in the poems from the Maitland Ms You may guess the surprise of Leyden and myself when this was presented to us copied down from the recitation of an old shepherd by a country farmer & with no greater corruptions than might be supposed to be introduced by the lapse of time & the ignorance of reciters I do not suppose that the poem originally was composed later than the days of Blind Harry Many of the old words are retained which neither the reciter nor copier understood—such are the military engines *Sowies*, *Spring-walls* (Springalds) & many others Tho' the poetical merit of this literary curiosity is not striking, yet it has an odd energy & dramatic effect—For instance—the three sons of Maitland engage three English warriors in barriers upon the bridge of *Billop-Grace* in France (query what town?) then besieged by Edward 1st The eldest Maitland kills his opponent & thus addresses his brothers <sup>1</sup>

I think you will find some rude energy in these verses—The excuse of the eldest for not abiding by his declaration of neutrality strikes me as being admirable With this

<sup>1</sup> Here Scott quotes some verses beginning

Now I've slayne ane, slay ye the twa, &c

In an incomplete letter of 29th May Ellis says I am sorry I cannot answer satisfactorily your question about *Billoth Grace* It looks like a corruption of *Ville de Grace*, but I do not know any town of the name of *Grace* either in Guienne or in Flanders, in one of which provinces it must have been, to have sustained a siege against the troops of Edward 1st But it is possible that Scott's minstrel may have transported the town of Grace in Provence into King Edward's way He thinks Douce's MS is particularly valuable as it serves to prove how early the English language was cultivated in Scotland and the intercourse which there subsisted between the Anglo Norman, the Celtic, and the French minstrels Along with Douce he inclines to reject Tanner's and Warton's assigning *Alexander* to Adam Davie—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot* For Ellis's high opinion of Lord Dalkeith see Vol I, p 185, note On 10th April Ritson had written to Scott, enclosing a copy of *The wee wee man* He strongly suspects the original MS has not been written by an Englishman owing to frequent corruptions, but it has some poetical merit, "though Mr Ellis declined inserting it in his *Specimens*, because he could not think of printing what he did not understand"—*Letters of Joseph Ritson etc* (1833), II, p 218

curiosity & several others which admit of a great deal of antiquarian embroidery in fashion of notes, & with some valuable modern imitations I doubt not to make out a third volume of Minstrelsy as interesting as the others to the admirers of antique legends. I find my young Chief & friend Lord Dalkeith is a great friend of yours & met you at Naples—you see we are daily discovering bonds of mutual connection—I have found out dissawar or at least *dissawara*<sup>1</sup> in Wintown—you remember the application puzzled us in Roswal & Lillian I refer you to Wintowns Glossary—I have heard lately from the accurate Ritson with a *copie of ye litel wee mon* of which I think I can make some use—In return I have sent him a sight of Auld Maitland, the original Ms so if you are curious I dare say you may easily see it—Indeed I might easily send *you* a transcribed copy but I wish *him* to see it *in puris naturalibus*. I beg you will convey Mrs Scotts particular respects as well as mine to Mrs Ellis & believe me ever Dear Sir Yours very faithfully

EDINR 10 May 1802

WALTER SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR SIR,<sup>2</sup>—Assuredly I would have been considerably surprized had you received a letter from me by the post in as much as I never accomplished my intention of writing by that conveyance. The truth is that Leyden then apprehended the time of his departure to be very very near & I deferred writing from day to day in hopes of sending you a long letter by a Scotch antiquary. In the

<sup>1</sup>“Dissawara (adj) III, III, III, seems *abandoned*, and is perhaps the same with *o, fr* deservree, *broken up, left off*, abandoned. —Glossary in Androw of Wyntoun's *De Orygnale Cronykil of Scotland* (1795), vol 1. See Ellis, *Metr Romes*, III, p 375

A few sentences from this letter, but in a changed order, are incorporated in the text of Lockhart's *Life*, and were omitted in our first volume. We print the greater part of the letter

mean time a variety of little provincial avocations call'd me from time to time to the country not to mention I had the merit of making a grand tour in quest of old Ballads in the course of which besides the risque of swamping in bogs & breaking my neck over *scaurs* I encountered the formidable hardships of sleeping upon peat-stacks & eating mutton slain by no common butcher but deprived of life by the Judgement of God as a Coroners inquest would express themselves I have however not only escaped safe, per varios casus per tot discrimina rerum, but have also return'd loaded with the treasures of oral tradition

My Brother is return'd to Scotland, his time was so very much occupied with attending to the Business of the M<sup>o</sup> of Abercorn which had call'd him to London that he could only accomplish my commission by putting Lady Juliana into the hands of a Bookseller I am happy the sporting Abbess has escaped the dangers of a mail coach & of the connoisseurs at Nicols My Brother & I alike regret that he had not the pleasure of seeing you or any of my friends in London I hope next Spring will enable me to gratify my earnest wishes once more to see the great City & the valuable friends whom it contains

As for *Mister* Ritson, he & I still continue on decent terms & in truth he makes *patte de velours* but I dread I shall see "a whisker first, & then a claw," stretched forth against my unfortunate lucubrations Ballantyne the Kelso printer who is throwing off one of his publications groans in spirit over the peculiarities of his type & orthography which sooth to say have seldom been equalld since the days of Elphinstone<sup>1</sup> the ingenious author of the mode of spelling according to the pronounciation which he aptly term'd "Propriety ascertain'd in her Picture" I fear the remark address'd by Festus to St Paul might be more justly applied to this curious investigator of antiquity, &

<sup>1</sup> James Elphinston (1721-1809), educationalist author of *Propriety ascertain'd in her Picture*, or, *English Speech and Spelling rendered mutual guides*, 2 vols (1787)

pity it is that such labour & research should be rendered useless & ridiculous by the infirmity of his temper <sup>1</sup>

You inquire about Sir Tristrem—the Worthy Knight is still in embryo—tho' the whole poetry is printed The fact is that a second edition of the *Minstrelsy* has been demanded from me rather more suddenly than I expected & has occupied my more immediate attention I have also my 3d volume to compile & arrange, for the *minstrelsy* is to be compleated altogether independent of the *Preux Chevalier* who might hang heavy upon its skirts I assure you the continuation is mere doggrel & not poetry—it is *argued in the same division* with Thomas's own production & therefore is hardly worth sending However you may depend upon receiving the whole long before publication I have derived much information from Turner <sup>2</sup> He combines the knowledge of the Welch & Northern authorities & in despite of a most detestable

<sup>1</sup> On 12th October Ellis had reported "Ritson has not yet *published* his romances (I beg his pardon Romances) because Nicol has very naturally taken the alarm at the enormous portion of blasphemy which the little unbeliving Antiquary had contrived to insert into his dissertation & notes' with the result that the great number of cancels will put an end to any hopes of profit "But on this head Ritson is very indifferent, though sufficiently alive to vanity Your Sir Tristrem is mentioned with proper respect, and I am rejoiced to find that he has adopted your opinions as to the date of the Auchinleck MS ' Ellis then asks to be furnished with some probable conjectures about the date of the French original of Richard Cœur de Lion, the English version (from the Caus Coll MS ) of which he is abridging "It cannot have been composed in France, because the French are abused in it most abominably Can it be of Scottish or border origin? I think I recollect an opinion there, that the Kings of England were lineally descended, either through the male or female line, from the Devil now Richards mother, who thinks fit to fly off with her two daughters, on so slight a provocation as the mere elevation of the host, through the ceiling of the church, must have had no small portion of diabolical blood in her veins (see Ellis, *Metr Roms*, II, pp 176 77) Besides, I think you mention a similar incident as occurring in some border ballad or tradition (see *Introd to The Young Tamlane, Border Minstrelsy*, ed Henderson 1902 Vol II, pp 311, note, 318 21) I wish to know also whether your ancient fragment is in the Northern or Southron English dialect —MS 873 Nat Lib Scot

Sharon Turner, *History of the Anglo Saxons, etc* (1799 1803) See Scott's *Sir Tristrem* (1804), p 271, where also, in the *Introd*, p lxxxvi, when commenting upon the "elliptical mode of narration adopted" in an age "much older than that of Barbour," Scott employs a modern comparison by terming it "the *Gibbonism* of romance"



*Gibbonism* his book is interesting I intend to study the Welch Triads before I finally commit myself on the subject of Border poetry

Your recollection has not deceived you about the descent of the Kings of England from the Devil The pedigree is traced by Bowmaker the continuator of Fordun from a marriage of Geoffrey of Anjou with a fiend The passage is quoted in the Minstrely (of which I have no copy by me) in a long note subjoind to the dissertation upon fairies which is prefixed to The tale of Tamlane The tale is a *common fiction of romance* It occurs in the history of *Richard sans peur*<sup>1</sup> & another instance is I think quoted by Heywood in the Hierarchy of the Blessed Angels or by Delio There is in the Auchinleck Ms a fragment of King Richard It consists only of two leaves & these not continuous moreover the first page of the three is nearly obliterated Nevertheless I do not think it the same with the poem you are abridging & therefore I will endeavor to give you some account of the fragment imperfect as such account must be There is an illumination prefix of K Richard in his Galley with his battle axe in hand rowing on to attack a castle mand by Saracens The introduction seems so much to your purpose that I have bestowd much India rubber & stale bread to render it legible It runs thus

Loïd Thu King of glorie

Swiche aventours & swiche victorie &c

[Here follows a number of lines from the opening of the old romance of Richard Cœur de Lion, and a brief analysis of the story, as gathered from the two leaves preserved in the Auchinleck MS of the Advocates Library, with some further quotations Ellis included the romance in his selections drawing mainly from a MS in the library of Caius College, Cambridge, supplemented by this fragment and two others, Harl 496 (Brit Mus) and Douce MS 228 (Oxford) ]

<sup>1</sup> *Histoire Du Redouté Prince Richard Sans Peur Duc de Normandie, etc* Par Nicolas et Pierre Bonfons (n d) See *Border Minstrely*, ed Henderson (1902), II, p 321 note The other works are Thomas Heywood, *The Hierarchy of the blessed Angels etc* (1635), see *A L C* p 123, and Martinus Antonius Del Rio, *Disquisitionum Magicarum libri sex* (1599)

I flatter myself these particulars will not be unacceptable to you in your present employment. The poem appears to have been written at a period when it was very necessary to apologize for not writing in French & therefore probably corresponds in date with that of *Arthur & Merlin* the Author of which explains at length his reason for using the vernacular idiom. From what you observe of true events being mingled with fiction in your copy I confess I am inclined to think that there has been some older French original from which perchance the true parts of the story have been extracted & mingled with romantick & fanciful decorations by succeeding minstrels. I own I cannot see any reason for thinking that this common original could have been of Scottish or Border growth. It is true that many Scottish Barons went from the West Border to the Holy Warrs of Richard still however a Scottish Minstrel would hardly have chosen a hero of a foreign & hostile country or if he did so he would scarcely have avoided bringing into notice some of his own countrymen. Your argument against the Romance being originally written in French does not strike me as being altogether conclusive. Richard had extensive dominions in France and was always surrounded by the Minstrels of Normandy Gascoigne & Poitou. None of these would be withheld by any patriotic feelings from abusing the French properly so called, commanded as they were by Philip the false friend & at length the mortal foe of Richard the immediate sovereign and protector of the Bards. Still however I am open to conviction on this subject & shall rejoice if you can prove that one of my countrymen threw aside national prejudice & became the Homer of the Lion-hearted Richard. Let me know if a perfect copy of the fragment & of the corresponding passage in the Chronicle will at all assist your researches & it shall be instantly made out.

And now my dear Sir let me tell you how impatient I shall be to receive the precious packet which Mrs. Ellis

has destined for me I hope Heber will do as he would be done by in such a case & judge of my feeling by his own His Bookseller may forward it either to Manners & Millar or to Constable of Edinr but what I think will be a better conveyance is the opportunity of sending it safely by my friend & Brother Lawyer Thompson who is to be in town for a few days & will not fail to see Heber

It is so long since I have seen Vinsauf's *Itinerarium*<sup>1</sup> that I have not been so capable as I could wish of forming a perfect conclusion on the subject of your letter I shall endeavour to collect my ideas better before I write again I have finishd a long historical sort of a Ballad upon the death of the Regent Murray shot in Linlithgow by Hamilton of Bothwellhaugh<sup>2</sup> If after revisal I think it worth sending I will beg Mrs Ellis' acceptance of a copy and your criticisms *there annent* Believe me always Dear Sir  
Yours faithfully

W SCOTT

COTT[AGE] LASWADE

Sunday 17th Octr [1802]

<sup>1</sup> *Itinerarium Regis Anglorum Richardi, etc Auctore Gaufrido Vinsauf* This is printed by Thomas Gale in his *Historie Anglicane Scriptores, etc*, ii (1687), pp 247 *et seq* According to the *DNB*, by printing this along with two poems on Richard I, of which Vinsauf makes use in his *Poetria Novella*, Bishop Stubbs thought that Gale had mistakenly attributed the authorship of the *Itinerarium* to Vinsauf After pointing out discrepancies and similarities between Scott's fragment of Richard I and the one he is abridging, Ellis says "Is it not therefore most probable that both translations are from the same French original, but that *your* Romance was successively embellished with different additions, borrowed à droite & à gauche, by English (or Scotch) minstrels, till it assumed the form under which it now appears in the Caus Coll MS, in that of Dr Farmer, & in the printed copies?" The similarity of the two prologues only *proves*, I think, the identity of the French original, or rather of the *original original* (for perhaps it is as likely that the interpolations may have been first introduced into the French as the English) and this alone affords a curious authority respecting the relative antiquity of our romantic tales With respect to the date of that of Richard, I should, arguing from the internal evidence of the story as it now stands, assign the French to the reign of Edward I As to the translation, your MS proves that it was not later than the end of Edwd 2 or beginning of Edwd 3, and I am rather inclined to adopt the former date —MS 873, Nat Lib Scot, dated 1st November

<sup>2</sup> e "Cadyow Castle" See our Vol I, pp 149 51, 155

My brother is just come in He says upon enquiring after you he understood you had been on a visit to some watering place <sup>1</sup>

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR SIR,<sup>2</sup>—I have deferred from day to day answering your last favour expecting almost hourly that the learned John of Leyden would have been the bearer of my letter but his departure is still deferred I am the more vexed at waiting his motions as it must have made me appear ungrateful for one of the most acceptable presents I ever received which came safe to my hands through the medium of Thompson I assure you I might without exaggeration impute my silence to the want of words to express my sense of the value of Mrs Ellis Ms especially when I consider how much of her time must necessarily have been engrossed by a task of such length & so beautifully executed I have studied the Romance with great pleasure & I am by no means surprized at the high interest which it seems to have excited in Scotland for the situations are sometimes good and drawn with great force The dying picture

<sup>1</sup> On 1st November Ellis adds "We have not been, as Nicol (who is a bit of a goose) reported to your brother at a *watering* place, but had been absent for some [time] at Sir P Parker's in Essex, but were returned to this our residence [Sunning Hill] at the time of Mr Scott's arrival in London"—MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

<sup>2</sup> Lockhart omits this letter altogether Mrs Ellis had made in her own hand a transcript for Scott of the romance of *Sir Eger, Sir Grahame, and Sir Gray Steel* Ellis published an abstract and says "I do not know of its existence in a perfect state, either in MS or in print, unless it be preserved entire in Bishop Percy's folio It was printed (perhaps at Aberdeen) in 1711, and from a copy of this date, in the possession of Mr Douce, the following abstract is taken But the printer has evidently followed a very imperfect MS and the story, as it now stands, is so obscurely told, that the catastrophe is quite unintelligible" He goes on to note its popularity in Scotland in the sixteenth century and refers to Leyden's edition of the *Complaynt of Scotland* and Scott's *Sir Tristrem*—*Early English Metrical Romances*, III p 299

of Graysteel tearing up the grass in his agonies is horribly fine I wish the conclusion had been less obscure I think it probable that in the great tournament which Sir Graham had proclaimed in the land of Bealme he fell by the lance of his friend Sir Eger without their knowing each other As for Graysteel his name seems to have past into a proverb for gallantry & courage At a sale of paintings the other day I saw a portrait of a warrior bearing this inscription "Alexander Earl of Eglinton commonly called *Graysteel* great great grandfather to Lady Euphemia Montgomerie wife to George Lockhart Esq of Carnwarth" This nobleman flourished in the reign of James VI and was famous for feats of Chivalry In Sir David Lindsays interlude<sup>1</sup> Finlay of the fute bande a boastful Thraso says

This is the sword that slew *GraySteill*  
Nocht half a mile beyond Kinneill

and many passages might be pointed out tending to shew the high popularity of this romance from which you will easily guess my satisfaction at receiving such a copy from such hands

Your deduction[s] from the variations in the Cueur (Coeur) de Lion Romance are very ingenious and interesting and I certainly cannot gainsay your conclusions especially as I never saw the full Romance of King Richard I have sometimes thought that the original of the Knight who married the Devil may perhaps be traced to a distorted account of the marriage of Guy de Lusignan with the fairy Melusina which undoubtedly is a tale of great antiquity I have turned over a good number of Books to find my authority concerning the Lord of the Castle of Espervel & still incline to think it is somewhere in the magical dissertations of Delrio tho' all my industry has not been able to

<sup>1</sup> *Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estatis* (1552) "Schir David Lyndsayis Play" See *Works of Sir David Lindsay*, ed D Hamer (Scot Text Soc 1930 33), II, p 30

find it It was a slovenly trick to omit quoting my authority If not in Delrio I think it will be in Thomas Heywood[’s] Hierarchie <sup>1</sup> As for the devilish marriage of the Count of Anjou I think it is mentiond by Polydore Virgil as well as by Bowmaker <sup>2</sup> Both stories are probably in Le Loyer whose sapient disquisitions are not at my hand at present

I am at present busy reprinting the Minstrelsy Long man in Pater Noster Row has been down here in Summer & purchased the Copy Right for which he is to give me £500 in the disposal of which sum I shall not hold myself accountable to the rules of prudence or discretion but employ a *ma fantaisie* Sir Tristram is a separate property but he will be upon the same scale with the Minstrelsy in point of size—I have been since commencing this letter tormenting my brains about Espervel & have laid down my pen at the end of every sentence to consult the books I thought it most likely to be found in it now occurs to me with the feeling of something like certainty that it is a tale of honest Gervase of Tillbury<sup>3</sup> to whom I refer you before farther search the book is not by me so I cannot verify my conjecture Ballantyne who printed the Minstrelsy is coming to settle in Edinr under the auspices of certain London Booksellers as he is a very clever young man with a strong literary turn

<sup>1</sup> See A Melville Clark, *Thomas Heywood, etc* (1931), pp 145 50, for this ‘great jungle of fact and fiction, science and the reverse, superstition and shaky metaphysics’ “Le Loyer” is Pierre le Loyer’s *III<sup>e</sup> Livres des Spectres ou Apparitions et Visions d’Esprits, Anges et Demons, etc* (1586), re edited as *Discours et Histoire des Spectres etc*, in 1605 and 1608, for the last edition see A L C p 140 For “Guv de Lusignan” and “Melusina” see Preface to *The Romans of Partenay, or of Lusignan otherwise known as The Tale of Melusine Translated from the French of La Coudrette (about 1500-1520 c.)*, edited by W W Skeat (Early Eng Text Soc, Original Series, No 22 1866), especially p viii

<sup>2</sup> *Polydori Vergili Urbinate Anglica Historiae Libri xxvi*, Basel (1534) This brought the history to 1509 Later editions continued it See *DNB* Walter Bower or Bowmaker (d 1449) is the reported continuator of Fordun’s *Chronica Gentis Scotorum* as it appears in the volume generally known as *Scotchchronicon* —*DNB* He was Abbot of Inchmacolm

<sup>3</sup> See note to letter to Ellis 25th May 1803 p 234

I think it possible he may make a good figure in which case I shall assume to myself the credit of having ferretted him out Thompson brings a lamentable account of Ritson for whom Ballantyne is printing the Pistle of the Swete Susanne I understand he is about a work in which the religion of the country is so handled as bids fair to promote the little Antiquary to the honors of the pillory which station will be the more acceptable to him as it can be proved to be of genuine Saxon origin For my share if the catastrophe should unfortunately take place I shall be tempted to regard [it] as an appropriate punishment or rather judgement upon him for so great a dereliction of his own principles as actually to eat eggs altho' he regards as a mortal sin the picking the bones of the *pullen* who lay them For me if I held such opinions I should as soon think of eating a birth-strangled babe I hope we shall have the Romances which cannot fail to be curious altho' embroidered with the most whimsical ornaments that his imagination can devise<sup>1</sup> When Leyden sets off I will trouble him with the little Ms for Mrs Ellis to whom I beg gratefully & respectfully to be remembered Believe me ever My dear Sir Yours most faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN 29 Nov [1802]

I believe I have never formally pleaded guilty to the misinterpretation of the word *frush* It is certainly *brittle* & how any other explanation should have crept into the book is what I cannot account for Your derivation seems very just

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

<sup>1</sup> See part of Ellis's letter of 11th December, quoted in note, Vol I, p 185 In addition Ellis says 'His [Ritson's] romances will certainly interest you, but they have been so much softened down by Heber, that his representation on the pillory will of course be deferred, unless he should contrive to mount thither on the shoulders of the sweet Susanne, & of this also I have some doubt because your protégé Ballantyne may possibly be as unambitious as George Nicol, and will perhaps consult you before he commits the Pistle with its commentary to the Public'—MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

TO GFORGE ELLIS

[Decr 1802]

MY DEAR SIR,<sup>1</sup>—At length I write to you pr favour of John Leyden I presume Heber has made you sufficiently acquainted with this original (for his is a true one) and therefore I will only trust to your own kindness should an opportunity occur of doing him any service in furthering his Indian plans You will readily judge from conversing with him that with a very uncommon stock of acquired knowledge he wants a good deal of another sort of knowledge which is only to be gleand from an early intercourse with polishd Society But he dances his bear with a good confidence and the Bear itself is a very goodnatured & well-conditiond animal All his friends here are much interested about him as the qualities both of his heart & head are very uncommon He will deliver to Mrs Ellis the promised legendary tale I can only say as Sancho's wife did of the acorns which she sent to the Dutchess that I wish it were better for her sake To you he will present the running copy of Sir Tristrem as far as hitherto printed It will be early in Spring before I can resume the publication as this is our busy time at the Bar and the new Edition of the Minstrely presses Ballantyne hard The few remarks I have to offer on Scottish poetry I intend to prefix to Sir Tristrem as I cannot get them into any

<sup>1</sup> A few sentences of this letter are also printed in Lockhart's *Life* but were not included in our first volume We print the letter here entire On 16th January 1803, from "No 66 Wimpole Street," Ellis describes Leyden's arrival in London "Leyden would not have been your Leyden if he had arrived, like a careful citizen, with all his packages carefully docketed in his portmanteau if he had not arrived with all his ideas perfectly bewil dered, and tired to death, & sick, & without any settled plans for futurity we should have felt much more disappointed than we were by the non appearance of your poem, which he assured us he remembered to have left somewhere or other & consequently felt very confident of recovering In short his whole air & countenance told us 'I am come to be one of your friends', and we immediately took him at his word so that we are now *old* friends"—MS 873, *Nat Lib Scot*



shape sooner than the worthy Knights appearance I shall also be glad to avail myself of the knowledge I may be able to pick up in the mean time , especially as I hope to visit your great city in Spring A heavy personage here of the name of Sibbald has publishd what he calls a compendium or Chronicle of Scottish poetry<sup>1</sup> (in which he abuses me by the way for being so slow in publishing *Sir Tristrem*) It consists of extracts from the *Bannatyne Ms* but contains little or nothing that has not been already publishd I would advise you however to buy it as the fourth vol<sup>1</sup> contains some curious remarks on the ancient Scottish music & an uncommonly good glossary Nicol is the Londn publisher—

From your last letter I am concernd to observe that you are at present engaged in an afflicting & depressing task in which I sincerely sympathise It is painful to see the curtain dropping by degrees upon the last scene of mortal existence but to watch it is a sacred duty in such a case as yours<sup>2</sup>

Did I ever mention that the oldest Book known to have been printed in Scotland (about 1511 I think) contains the Romance of *Sir Eglamore*<sup>3</sup> & would you wish to have a copy of it The same contains a tale of Robin Hood, similar to the *Lytille Geste* which is the first article of

<sup>1</sup> *Chronicle of Scottish Poetry, from the Thirteenth Century, to the Union of the Crowns to which is added A Glossary*, by J Sibbald 4 vols (1802) Referring to *Sir Tristrem* as "the earliest production of the Scottish Muse extant," Sibbald says "A copy of this work, belonging to the Advocates Libr Edinb, has for some years been in the hands of a gentleman of the faculty, who proposes to favour the world with an edition of it in due time"—Vol I, p xiii

<sup>2</sup> See next letter to Ellis and note 2, p 232

<sup>3</sup> Scott goes wrong in attributing *both* romances to the earliest Scottish printing *Sir Eglamore* is in the third tract of the Chepman and Myllar Prints "The first nine tracts of the collection were printed at the South gait (now the Cowgate) of Edinburgh in or about the year 1508, three of them being dated April of that year'—Intro to *The Makculloch and Gray MSS together with The Chepman and Myllar Prints* (Scot Text Soc 1918), p xviii But 'A Gest of Robyn Hode' forms the eleventh tract, which (see Intro *op cit* p xviii) has been assigned to a foreign press, "neither the type nor the language having Scottish characteristics"

Ritson's collection If you are not aware of this circumstance perhaps it may help your elephants a little bit

My third volume will appear as soon after the other two, as the dispatch of the printers will admit—some parts will I think interest you, particularly the preservation of the entire Ballad of Auld Maitland by oral tradition probably from the reign of Edward 2d or 3d As I have never met with such an instance of tradition existing without record I must request you will enquire about it at John Leyden who was with me when I recoverd the first copy Besides Cadzow castle I intend to publish a long poem of my own in the 3d vol It will be a kind of Romance of Border Chivalry in a Light Horseman sort of stanza—Ballantyne has been trying some new types & as he always chuses to arrange them in some poetical form, he has sent me two copies of his proof of which he has thrown off only twelve, the contents are selected from poems which have been chiefly circulated in Ms, or in news-papers—At any rate the little pamphlet not being published is R R R R which is enough for a collector such as M[r] Ellis who I hope will honor it with a place in his Library I presume you know Mr Spencer<sup>1</sup> two of whose poems appear in the proof The Visionary I think is exquisite—I am sorry to hear that the terrestrial apotheosis of our little friend Ritson is so likely to be deferred by the cowardice of his Booksellers I am sure the disappointment will give a severe shock to his nerves But if any thing can comfort him it will be the arrival of Leyden whom he loves with a love surpassing the love of women—Hebers sally to France promises infinite amusement to his friends I fear I must wait for my share till I have the good fortune to meet him, for even should he honor me with a written account of his adventures my poor eyes can at present hardly distinguish the print of my Grandmothers Baskerville bible, far less

<sup>1</sup> Robert William Spencer, for whom see Vol II, p 243 and note, and *Lockhart*, chaps lxxii, lxxiii, and the *Journal*, 13th May 1827, with note there

the series of *dots* which he pretends form words or sentences<sup>1</sup>

My kindest & most respectful Compliments attend Mrs Ellis in which Mrs S cordially joins—Adieu my dear Sir  
Ever yours faithfully,

W SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR SIR,—The melancholy conclusion of your late letter gave me the most sincere concern and I should hardly venture to intrude upon you in such complicated domestic distress did I not feel anxious to hear how Mrs Ellis now is after the late melancholy shock I cannot feel sufficiently grateful to you for finding time during such painful scenes to be of such essential service to Leyden who writes to me in the highest strain of gratitude for the assistance you rendered him respecting his voyage Indeed if he had saved his life from the unfortunate Hindostan he must have lost all his books baggage &c &c to him a loss absolutely irreparable

I resume our literary topics which may serve to divert your attention & indeed my own from painful reflections for I only yesterday received advice of the death of a cousin German—son of my uncle Scott of Reaburn, who has fallen a victim to the yellow fever in the West Indies I believe it will kill his mother who was doatingly fond of him<sup>2</sup> Your system of a birds-eye view is certainly the true principle and may almost always be attained

<sup>1</sup> From "Laswade Cottage Novr 4 1800" Leyden had written to Heber "Mrs Scott begs you would either procure a little better ink or allow her to send you a bottle of her own making, that every body may not be obliged to sit gaping round Scott who pauses stamps and swears every three words that your handwriting is little better to read than a runic inscription on a weather beaten whinstone"—*MS 939, Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>2</sup> For what follows from "The idea of a map" to 'among our cairns' see Vol I, pp 174, 5 On the 21st, as postscript to his letter of the 16th, Ellis had reported the death of Lady Parker on the 18th"—*MS 873 Nat Lib Scot*

There are large provincial maps of the four Border counties namely the Shires of Roxburgh of Selkirk of Berwicke of Dumfries & also of Peebles which comprehends all we have to do with There are also in the advocates Library the draughts made from actual survey about the year 1706 exhibiting many remains of antiquity, peel-houses, woods &c &c now not to be found These would give great advantage and might be copied for a trifle There is in short no want of materials & were I at the Draughtsman's elbow I could describe the lying of the ground & hills, but this appears almost impossible in writing & I cannot draw a stroke I would be surprized at Leydens want of knowledge of the ground did I not recollect that though a native of the border he has been lately much better acquainted with other parts of Scotland Nevertheless he *ought* to have known Erceldoune<sup>1</sup>—you will find it in every map Look for Lauder which is 25 miles S of Edinr glance your eye down the Leader upon which brook that Burgh is situated and you will find Erceldoune or Earlstoun about four miles above its junction with the Tweed<sup>2</sup>

I am happy to hear of Hebers return & impatient to hear his news—no chance of that I suppose till I come to town which I think will be in March—Leydens meeting with him would be pleasant to both When you have time I should be most happy to hear how Mrs Ellis does to whom Charlotte & I offer our most sincere & affectionate sympathy Ever I remain Yours faithfully

W S

30 Jan'y [1803]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

<sup>1</sup> See Ellis's letter of the 16th in note, Vol I, p 174

<sup>2</sup> For what follows from "the map then must be deferred to" at the easy rate of one halfpenny" see Vol I, p 175 There is no omission after "courageously"

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I did not write to you from the immense Vanity-Fair because I could not hope to say any thing new, or interesting—not that I expect to do so at present to any extent but there are always some gleanings to be picked up in one's own stubble field. I inclose a transcript of the Chapter in Gervase of Tilbury<sup>1</sup> *De dominica Castri de Espervel* as far as concerns the story—there is a long moral added in which the young Emperor is cautioned to beware of heresy so that it would appear that the Devil of the Lord of Espervel was a protestant Devil. The same sheet contains the chapter in Fordun which I sought for in vain in Hearn's Edition<sup>2</sup>. I think it is highly to your purpose as relating to the crimes of King John whom however it makes a descendant not a child of the daemon. Perhaps we may infer from this that the Romance of Richard is later than we were disposed to believe, for while the recollection of his mother the Empress Maud was strong in the minds of the people I think even a romancer would hardly have identified her with the Lady of the Legend. The next chapter in Fordun is entitled *adhuc de nefandi generis præmissa successione* in which he proceeds to detail all the unnatural wars of the Plantagenets with their fathers brothers uncles & cousins imputing the whole of these family feuds, as well as the egaremen[t]s of Queen Elinor of Anjou to the mesalliance so unfortunately contracted by this admirer of female beauty—with his diabolical consort.

I also & at once found the chapter concerning Merlin which I will transcribe if you wish for it and indeed I think it will meet some of your wishes. It narrates the

<sup>1</sup> *Gervasi Tilberiensis, &c De Imperio Romano, et Gottorum, Ex ipsius Otus Imperialibus, nunc primum edita a J. J. Madero (1673)*—A L C p 234. It is frequently cited by Scott in the Introduction and Notes to *The Border Minstrelsy*.

Fordun (*Joannis de Scotichronicon, etc* edidit Th Hearnus, 5 vols (1723)—A L C p 14

mode of his life & the manner of his death at Drummelzier where his grave is still shewn I am inclined to believe the name of this place is derived from the grave of the prophet, *Drum-Merlicern* would be Tumulus Merlini

And now my dear Sir having *done the needful* let me tell you how often Charlotte & I think of the little paradise at Sunnyhill<sup>1</sup> Charlotte has to send her best thanks to Mrs Ellis for a packet received at London which she holds equally valuable for the interesting contents & for the flattering assurance that she retains a share in Mrs Ellis's recollection She is studying to procure some pretty & uncommon Scottish airs & if I have any vote in the matter they shall be transmitted to your Syren in all their simplicity—The day after I left you I went down to Oxford with Heber & was equally delighted with that venerable seat of learning & flattered by the polite attention of his friends<sup>2</sup> The new Edition of *Mintrelsy* is published here but not in London as yet owing to the embargo on our shipping I will study to transmit your set safe—perhaps I had best send it to the care of Mr John Ellis to whom I beg particularly to be remembered—Charlotte joins me in desiring you to say all that is kind for us to Mrs Ellis to whom (albeit unapt to write) she actually meditates writing On my own part can I say more than that from our personal acquaintance I am now even *doubly* anxious for a second meeting & I assure you our first acquaintance I will always hold an æra in my life—We have no news here except that an invasion is expected from Flushing & no measures of any kind taken to prevent or repel it Charlottes Love attends the veteran Admiral—as for me I think him so dangerous a rival that I rejoice at having placed so many hundred miles betwixt them so that I can with a safe & easy

<sup>1</sup> For what follows to “a change of climate” see Vol I, p 186

For what follows to “from its pleasing you” see Vol I, pp 185 6 Lockhart, it will be seen, has inverted the order of the extracts For “unrivel yourselves” (p 186) Scott has written “unroot yourselves”

conscience express my wishes for his welfare—Young Leyden is at work upon Ferragus & this transcript shall be speedily sent to you I suppose we shall not hear of his brother till his landing in India <sup>1</sup> Once more Ever yours faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 25 May 1803

How do the Mabinogi come on ?

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

^

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR FRIEND,—After I had made up my little packet I was very agreeably interrupted by the arrival of your letter which contains a great deal of important matter <sup>2</sup> Enough of Sir Tristrem for the present pray let me hear if my arguments appear to you in the least degree plausible Nota Bene There is great reason to suppose that Thomas of Erceldoune was the only person of the name who ever possesd the lands They seem to have been bestowd on him by the Earl of Dunbar , who had himself a castle in Earlston , whose rank gave name to the town , & who was the proprietor of all the lands around These lands were sold by the Rymour's son , so that there could be properly speaking only one Thomas of Erceldoune

How happy it will make us if you can fullfill the expectations you hold out of a northern expedition whether in

<sup>1</sup> From the Isle of Wight on 9th April, when on the point of sailing for Madras, Leyden had written "My money concerns I shall consider you as trustee of I hope these we shall soon be able to adjust very accurately Money may be paid but kindness never Assure your excellent Charlotte, whom I shall always recollect with much affection and esteem, how much I regret that I did not see her before my departure and now my dear Scott adieu, think of me with indulgence and be certain that wherever and in whatever situation John Leyden is, his heart is unchanged by place and his soul unaltered by time or fortune and that it will be long before you escape his recollection"—*Walpole Collection* See Leyden's *Scenes of Infancy* (1803), end of Part II

<sup>2</sup> For the omitted portion of this letter from "I cannot pretend" to "the antiquity of the romance" see Vol I, pp 190 2

the Cottage or in Edinr we will be equally happy to see you and anxious to show you all the lions of our vicinity I am particularly anxious to meet you upon the border to shew you some of the scene[s] about which we have so often held correspondence I am truly sorry for the distressed state of Mr Ellis' mind but would fain hope as well for his sake as for our own selfish views that his misfortune may sit as lightly as all things considered such an irrem[ed]-iable calamity can possibly do Charlotte is hunting out music for Mrs E but I intend to add Johnsons collection<sup>1</sup> which, though the tunes are simple, & often bad sets, contains much more original Scottish Music than I ever saw else where, & I know how easily Mrs E's talents & taste can rectify their imperfections Our best love attends her & I am ever Yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

[June 1803]

[Pierpont Morgan]

TO RICHARD HEBER

MY DEAR HEBER,—At length I have extracted from Ballantyne my copies of the Minstrelsy—and have to request you will favour the inclosed with a place not on your shelves for shelves you have as yet none but in the presses the cabinets the chests of drawers closets & tables which groan under your valuable collection Accept my best & most sincere congratulations on the subject of Reginalds success<sup>2</sup> I hope you intend to carry through

<sup>1</sup> *The Scots Musical Museum*, 6 vols, 1787-1803, to which Burns contributed

<sup>2</sup> Heber writes on 19th July, advising Scott that a copy of Reginald's Oxford English prize poem, *Palestine*, has been sent off to him "I only wish you cd have been present at its recital The Theatre was extremely well filled, it presented a very brilliant sight, & Reginald, tho I say it that shd not say it, did them no injustice in the recital, & met with very cordial & unanimous applause You will I think do it the justice to recognize no mean tone of Poetry in it tho wanting as to plan, arrangement, & contrivance"—*Walpole Collection* For further on the recital at Oxford see *Life of Reginald Heber by His Widow* (1830), 1, pp 30 33, *Lockhart*, chap vi, and *Journal*, 21st November 1826



our plan of printing at least a few copies of Palestine which Ballantyne will do with great beauty & correctness in any form you may pitch upon

I often think with pleasure upon the delightful days I spent at Oxford upon the beautiful scenery & architecture but above all upon your kindness & that of your friends I would fain hope (now that the temple of Janus is thrown open) that you will turn your eyes to Scotland—an event which would give so much pleasure to all your friends but to none more than to yours sincerely

W SCOTT

EDINR 4th June 1803

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER, MRS HEBERS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

DEAR HEBER,—I return you my best thanks for “*Palestine*” which loses nothing in print notwithstanding the very vivid impression of its merits which remained on my mind after the perusal in Ms I would have given a great deal to have heard the recital indeed Oxford is the only place where pomp and circumstance is given to the eclat of literary productions & such a recitation before such an audience forcibly reminds me of the honors conferred by the assembled nations of Greece upon their historians & poets Pray remember me kindly to the Bard I hope no circumstance (not even the benumbing [*sic*] influence of a good living) will prevent his pursuing a career commenced so brilliantly Not that I do not wish him the fat Living with all my soul but I hope as Fielding somewhere invokes the Muse of Profit, that it will confer its rewards but withhold its inspiration<sup>1</sup> Of course you will let me know what periodical publication it is to appear in I am not quite sure that I entirely approve your plan it is too

<sup>1</sup> See *Tom Jones*, Book XIII, chap 1 After invoking the “fair, gentle maid, whom Mneseis did produce, Fielding continues And thou, much plumper dame Come, thou jolly substance, with thy shining face, keep back thy inspiration, but hold forth thy tempting rewards, etc”

much like putting a candle below a bushel The light is there & burning but who the Devil would think of seeking it in such a place It will be a contention like that of the good & evil principles whether Palestine shall sell the Miscellany or the Miscellany suppress Palestine I have however great confidence in the earth-spurning powers of Palestine & have little doubt Reginald will finally soar carrying at his heels his astonished & dazzled companions who will feel their unexpected elevation pretty much as if it had been effected by means of a Balloon All our friends here had their copies—Erskine was delighted Cranstoun & Thomson are both out of Town

I hope nothing will interfere to prevent your coming this length this summer a circumstance which would give very particular pleasure to all your friends & to none more [than] to Dear Heber Yours very Sincerely

WALTER SCOTT

Charlotte sends kind Compliments Pray remember me to your Brother Tom<sup>1</sup> & to any of our friends who inquire after me particularly to Messrs Douce & Sotheby & Park, & the Oxonians of whose hospitality I have so warm a recollection I heard from Ellis yesterday

LASWADE COTTAGE 30 *Augt* 1803

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

LASWADE COTTAGE 14 *Sept* 1803

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>2</sup>—To be a good boy once in my life I shall answer your letter immediatly upon receiving it It

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Rev Thomas Cuthbert Heber (? 1816) Richard's younger half-brother He acted as curate to Reginald till 1815, 'when he removed to his own perpetual curacy of Moreton See [Say]' See *Life of Reginald Heber*, 1, pp 2, 439

<sup>2</sup> Some sentences from this letter, in a much altered order are printed by Lockhart See Vol I pp 203 4

was truly wellcome as containing good accounts of Mrs Ellis. I hope the post-chaise exercise will not greatly fatigue her and that this will find you & her safely and pleasantly settled "*in Yorkshure near fair Rotheram*" By the way while you are in his neighbourhood I hope you will not fail to enquire into the history of the valiant More of Morehall & the Dragon of Wantley. As a noted burlesque upon the popular romance the Ballad has some curiosity & merit. Since you cannot come close to us I wish you with all my soul safe once more at Sunninghill for we shall be little gainers by your being *only* 200 miles nearer to us.—The curious anecdote from Dudo St Quentin<sup>1</sup> corresponds with the symbolical mode in which an estate was held by the Buchanans of Arnprior which a Charter of a very early date declares to be *virtute parvi gladij quem dedit olim Rex Culenus* (who by the way seems to have been your old King Coul whose taste for music & conviviality has survived even unto our day). The *parvus gladius* is still preserved. As for the resignation *per fustem et Baculum* it continues to be an essential part of the law of Scotland all the forms of which are as strictly feudal as they were 300 years ago. It is by this form that a feudal superiority or *jus domini* is conveyd from one person to another, as the real property is expressd by the symbol of earth & stone.

<sup>1</sup> In his letter of 10th September Ellis recalls that Scott had formerly mentioned several anecdotes illustrative of a sentence in the Soltra chartulary containing "*per fustem & baculum &c*", and in this connexion Ellis quotes Dudo of St Quentin's statement that as a reward for help given to him by Athelstan during his first incursion into France, Rollo came back from the siege of Paris to defend him against a formidable conspiracy of his own subjects, " & that Athelstan, as a reward for this service, made him a present of half his dominions. Rollo, unwilling to be outdone in generosity, restores the present in these words 'Regnum quod mihi ultro dedisti, *per hunc mucronem, duodecim libras auri capulo habentem*, reddo tibi' ". Dudo is supposed to have written in 1002. I observe that the date of your charter is 1299, but I do not recollect whether you have assigned any conjectural date for the composition of Sir Tristrem, or whether there is any reason for supposing that the Rymour died old? My direction for the next fortnight will be at the E. of Effingham's, Grange, near Rotherham. —MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

As to the date of Sir Tristrem it seems impossible to offer any thing but conjecture upon the subject Thomas was alive in 1285 for he prophesied in that year the death of Alexr of Scotland but how long he survived that period seems quite uncertain only that he was dead in 1299 is proved by his son's selling the family estate It is probable that Thomas died in advanced life Your prophets are generally persons of ripe years & a venerable appearance I dont know indeed whether Brothers<sup>1</sup> was not an exception Taking therefore the middle course I shall suppose Tomas died in 1292 aged 60 years It is natural to suppose that Sir Tristrem his grand work & by which he had obtained the peculiar appellation of the Rhymer was the work of his prime of life, according to which calculation the date of the poem will draw back to 1260 or thereabouts which will give considerable time for his renown spreading both into England & France—I am very sorry to see that you flag over the Mabinogions (Lord grant I have spell'd that word right) for your outset was very promising and the tales wild & interesting<sup>2</sup>

At the same time if credit & profit came unlook'd for I would no more quarrel with them than with the soup My paper hardly allows me to add Charlottes kindest love to Mrs Ellis & you Ever yours

W SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

[14th October 1803]

MY DEAR ELLIS,—I was infinitely gratified with your account of Wortly loge and the dragon which once was

<sup>1</sup> Richard Brothers (1757-1824), the crazy religious prophet and writer of prophecies At this period he was confined in an Islington asylum See *DNB*

<sup>2</sup> For the omitted sentences see Vol I, pp 203-4, and for the concluding remarks of Ellis's letter of 10th September see note in Vol I, p 203

its inhabitant <sup>1</sup> I agree with you that the said dragon was probably some devouring wolf from the neighbouring forest and that from the tradition of the vulgar some jocular bard probably about James VI this time has written the facetious imitation of the ancient Romance which we have in the Ballad You will find in the Border Ballads, under the Article Kempion a curious instance of a Wolf or Boar confounded with a *wylde worme* or serpent Lord Somerville is the descendant of the preux chevalier by whom the monster was slain & a very ancient & rude piece of sculpture<sup>2</sup> attests at once the reality of the feat and the nature of the animal with whom he really combated—How much we would have rejoiced to see you here I am sure I need not attempt to say and yet I think or at least hope that next year will be a more propitious season for Mrs E & you to visit Scotland <sup>3</sup> Charlotte joins in love to Mrs E

W SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

<sup>1</sup> For Scott's enquiry about the Dragon of Wantley see Vol I, p 204 On 3rd October Ellis says that the dragon's den "is the spot from whence Lady Mary Wortley Montague wrote many of her early letters" He passes on two traditions about the dragon one, that he was a wicked attorney, who was eventually ruined by a lawsuit which he had brought against his powerful antagonist, Moor of Moor Hall, the other, current in the Wortley family, states him to have been a stout drinker, who was ultimately drunk dead by the chieftain of the opposite moors" But Ellis believes he was a wolf or some destructive animal who was finally hunted down by Moor of Moor Hall He then describes how the house, or cavern, has grown to its present size by additions to "a very small *logge* (lodge)," built in the time of Henry VIII —*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot* For the wolf or boar and serpent incident, to which Scott refers, see the introductory matter to the ballad, Kempion, in *Border Minstrelsy* (ed Henderson 1902), III, pp 296-99

<sup>2</sup> This is a reference to the sculpture on the tympanum of the doorway of the Church of Linton, Roxburghshire, on which a horseman is depicted slaying a monster It is supposed to represent a certain John Somerville, who is said to have acquired the manor by gift of William the Lion in 1174 as a reward for his bravery —James Curle

<sup>3</sup> The rest of this letter is printed from *Lockhart* in Vol I, pp 204-6 He has made characteristic alterations It is not 'God' (p 204) who has left us entirely to our own means" but "Government" On p 205 after "his own notes and writings" Scott goes on "I hope our friend Heber has not been inattentive upon this occasion & I have almost had thoughts of

TO GEORGE ELLIS

[Received Monday 19th March 1804]

DEAR ELLIS,—As I had a world of things to say<sup>1</sup>  
As Heber is an erratic comet, & I have forgot the name  
of Mr Douces street I propose to put the whole under your  
charge And now let me thank you kindly for your  
second edition with which I have been very busy for some  
time past, for the purpose of giving a proper account of  
it in the aforesaid Edinr Review I quite agree with you  
in the general conduct of the work which savours more  
of a wish to display than to instruct but as Essays many of  
the articles are invaluable and the principal conductor is  
a man of very acute & universal talent I am not regu-  
larly connected with the work, nor have I either inclina-  
tion or talents to use the critical scalping knife unless as  
in the case of Godwin where flesh & blood succumbed  
under the temptation<sup>2</sup> I do not know if you have looked  
into his tomes of which a whole edition has vanishd I was  
at a loss to know how, till I conjectured that, as the  
heaviest materials to be come at, they have been sent on  
the secret expedition pland by Mr Philips & adopted by  
our sapient Premier for blocking up the mouth of our  
enemies harbours They should have had my free con-  
sent to take Philips & Godwin & the Doctor and all our  
other lumber literary & political for the same beneficial  
purpose But in general I think it ungentlemanly to  
wound any persons feelings through an anonymous publi-  
cation unless where conceit or false doctrine strongly calls

instigating the Duke of Roxburgh to a purchase were I not afraid of inter-  
fering with his interest In some way or other *w* i e you & I must see  
some of that strange animals collection "

<sup>1</sup> For what follows down to "kindness while in London" see Vol I,  
p 214 Lockhart has again, as will be noticed, rearranged the portions of  
his letter We have reprinted therefore a small portion omitting the main  
part printed in Vol I that dealing with Thomas Lockhart has gone so  
far as to transfer a portion of this letter to a later one of May See Vol I,  
p 222

See note, Vol I p 216

for reprobation Where praise can be conscientiously mingled in a larger proportion than blame there is always some amusement in throwing together our ideas upon the works of our fellow-labourers & no injustice in publishing them On such occasions & *in our way* I may possibly once or twice a year furnish my critical friends with an article—*Lay le fraim* is put in hand as the trades folk say and will reach you in the course of next week as a friend of mine sets off for London on Monday I wish from my heart I could join his party were it but to see you and Mrs Ellis—I will be infinitely obliged to you for the abstract of Chevreffeuille <sup>1</sup> I saw the Book & pickd out the first half Dozen of lines when in town but had not then time to proceed & have been bilkd by a friend who promised me some account of it and has proved unwilling or unable to fullfill his promise I must only hurry you with yours as we are just printing off—a very brief sketch of the story will effectually serve my purpose What a treasure do I propose myself to enjoy in the Romances completed in the same lively and interesting manner with those I saw at Sunning Hill—I am quite on tiptoe with expectation Pray send me without delay <sup>2</sup> I have also much to say about your journey but have hardly left room for my own & Charlottes love to our dear Mrs Ellis & Sir P Parker Of Leyden also in my next No letters from him

W SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

EDIN 4 May 1804

MY DEAR ELLIS,—Since I had your inestimable favour with the Lai of Marie, I have been chiefly engaged in travelling backwards & forwards to Selkirkshire upon

<sup>1</sup> See note, Vol I p 214

<sup>2</sup> For what follows down to '*dress backwards* for ten years' see Vol I, pp 214 16

little fidgetty pieces of business <sup>1</sup> You see we reckon positively upon your making out your promised visit to Caledonia & I assure you there is nothing Charlotte & I look forward to with more pleasure My plan is that you should come to Edinr in the end of June & see the lions alive and dead for the 12th of July is the signal for dispersing all of the noble race that are locomotive We can then take a little tour in any direction to which you feel most inclination and return by my farm where we shall reckon upon a long visit as it will be a central place for headquarters & lies within a short distance of many places upon the border which you will naturally wish to see I am more encouraged to build up this little plan because our Arch-Critic Jeffery tells me that he has seen you in London and found you still inclined to a Northern trip If you delay your journey till July I cannot answer for your seeing much of the Edinr people of letters, but in recompense as I shall then be free from our courts of law I will meet you upon the Border at whatever side you enter and endeavour to make you acquainted with any curiosities that may lie in our way All our wise men of the North are rejoiced at the prospect of seeing George Ellis

Sir Tristrem is at length publishd I send three uncastrated copies for Heber, Douce, and you by the coach tomorrow to the care of Longman & Rees who will forward them as you may direct I hope you will find something to suit your purpose although I have not dwelt so fully on the origin of the Border poetry as perchance I might have done Some circumstances have since occurred to me in aid of my hypothesis that English was sooner spoken as a classical language in Scotland than in England—these I will throw together when I hear your opinion on the dissertation itself Thus much is certain that if there

<sup>1</sup> For the small sentences here omitted see Vol I, p 220 The greater part is here printed for the first time The concluding paragraph deals with poor Daniel



is any thing worth reading in it, it is derived from your suggestions You will have an opportunity fully to consider the subject in the prefatory dissertation to your metrical romances, since I think it is the circumstance which most strongly favours your opinion concerning the Border origin of the earliest of these fictions What pleasure I promise myself in showing you the country which was the cradle of Romance Do not however expect the umbrageous splendour of Windsor forest—our Border woods have been long decayed an[*erased*] & Ettricke fforest though it retains the name [*is*] none of those woods which cannot be seen for the trees

And now I have a favour to request if you can grant it conveniently through the means of any of your West-Indian connections A young man, a very near relation of mine, who is bred in the mercantile line has been obliged by some untoward circumstances to turn his eyes towards Jamaica & I am anxiously desirous to procure him such recommendations as may put it in his power to gain his bread decently upon his arrival there He is a very good-natured young man, writes & figures very decently having been long in the Custom-house here where he had a good chance of promotion had he not formd an imprudent connexion with an artful woman which was likely to end in a *mesalliance* without this change of climate From this you will understand he is a little *soft* & can only be engaged in some subaltern employment till he shall shew himself capable of promotion If you could without putting yourself or any one else to much trouble procure this poor helpless lad (his name is Daniel Scott) such letters as would procure him employment as a Clerk I should esteem it a very particular kindness as he is a very near relation & at present in a very helpless state He is now at Liverpool whence he will sail in a short time  
Yours truly,

W S

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

## TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—I have your letter this morning and am completely sensible of the enormities I have been guilty of as a correspondent, my best apology is that my *Reged* plan required a great deal of adjusting & that for more than a month my head was fairly tenanted by ideas which though strictly pastoral & rural were neither literary nor poetical *Long* sheep & *shprt* sheep, and *tups* & *gimmers* & *hogs* & *dinmonts* had made a perfect sheepfold of my understanding which is hardly yet cleared of them I am greatly obliged to you for your complying so kindly with my request in favour of poor Daniel Scott who partly from his own soft temper & partly from a kind of fatality has hitherto had reason enough to sing "*fortune my foe*" The favour you intend him of an introductory letter to Mr Blackburn will come safe to hand if addressed to D Scott at the Post Office Liverpool to remain till call'd for As he is about to shift his lodgings that is the way his friends address him at present He has received very creditable testimonies of his application to business from the Gentlemen who superintend the office of the Customs in which he was employed so that I would fain hope that if he does no particular honour to your recommendation he at least will be able to make himself useful in any department where his services may be wanted Pray in what part of the island does Mr Blackburn reside? <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> A few sentences from this letter are printed from *Lockhart* See Vol I, p 222 He has added to his extract a few sentences from the middle of the letter of 4th May We have reprinted the letter in full The original is undated but Lockhart says On the 19th he thus apologizes for not having answered a letter of the 10th 'The PM looks more like 16th May

<sup>2</sup> "Mr Blackburn," Ellis replies on 20th May, "lives almost every where He has an excellent estate in the parish of St Mary's on the North side of Jamaica, & another in St Catherine's on the South side, & superintends at least a dozen in the interior His most usual residence is at a place called 'The Farm,' exactly half way between Spanish town & Kingston where, I suppose, Mr D Scott means to disembark I will write immediately, and think I can promise that if Blackburn fails to place your friend no man in the island would be able to do it' —MS 873 Nat Lib Scot

I hope you have ere this received Sir Tristrem & pray God you may think him worth a wellcome—he took his departure on Monday sennight by the coach so must be with Longman & Rees long ere now There are copies for Heber Douç & Mr Park who was so kind as to send me a copy of the *Nugæ Antiquæ* You have mistaken the author of the critique on the Specimens in the ponderous & square review<sup>1</sup>—I offerd my services but another person had prepared the article I do not think the said annual review will *stand*, although there are some good articles The interpolation of your friendly & partial review of the 3d volume of *Minstrelsy* was in my opinion

<sup>1</sup> On the 10th Ellis affirms that there is only one person whose talent as a reviewer “perfectly meets my ideas of perfection, and he is the author of the critique on the *Amadis* & on Godwin’s *Chaucer* pray thank that person for his kind & partial account of my specimens both in the Edinburgh review & in that which is called Aikin’s I only presume that the latter must be by the same hand as the former because I know no other person who has learned to *spell* the very difficult word *Mabinogion* Pray have you seen a work on the Celts by a certain Revd Mr Davies? I believe I must read it a second time before I can satisfy my judgement concerning it, but at my first survey it pleased my *taste* more than almost any book I ever saw on an Antiquarian Subject’ This is Edward Davies’s *Celtic Researches, on the Origin, Traditions & Language, of the Ancient Britons, etc* (1804) Against his opinions and principle, Ellis has consented to review for Longman the third volume of *The Minstrelsy*—“but behold, the Editor has thought fit to erase all the latter part of my article, to call Leyden’s a *drawling* style, and to substitute his own opinions for mine in every thing that relates to the *modern part* of your volume Astonished at this, I turned to the very short article which is given to Leyden’s beautiful poem of the Scenes of Infancy (a work which I very sincerely admire) and found that poor Leyden is there asserted not to have the mind of a poet! Peace to the manes of those who think so! only I wish that an epithet intended to ridicule a person whom I much admire & for whom I feel friendship had not been tacked to my opinion, which, however inferior in sprightliness to that of my *double*, I still think more just than his Why Longman & Rees tolerate an unjust attack on a work published by themselves I know not’—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot* Sir John Harrington’s *Nugæ Antiquæ, being a Miscellaneous Collection of Original Papers in Prose and Verse &c newly arranged with Illustrative Notes*, by Thomas Park, 2 vols (1804) “The ponderous and square review” is the *Annual Review and History of Literature for 1803*, Arthur Aikin, Editor (1804) Vol II, which, in chapter x, *Poetry*, reviews successively (probably by Southey) Ritson’s *Ancient English Romances*, Scott’s *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, vol III, and Ellis’s *Specimens of the Early English Poetry*, 3rd edit., corrected, 3 vols For Arthur Aikin (son of John), a chemist and scientist, see *DNB* His ponderous review lasted till 1808

a very impudent thing and I cannot conceive why L. & R. should have been such fools as to permit an attack on the Scenes of Infancy for which they have advanced money. The objection that it wants a uniform plan may be stated against almost every didactic work—if the poem wants interest to a Southern reader I should rather ascribe it to a locality somewhat of too limited a nature. But I think no one can deny that in many passages he has caught a train of the truest descriptive poetry and in many others has expressed with elegance feelings which do equal honor to his imagination & to his heart. By the bye I am petrified with astonishment at his obstinate silence. I hope he has not adopted the maxim of some of his favourite spectres & intends not to write till he has been previously written to. I think however I can answer for it that his silence is owing to some cause very different from the sea having washed his friends out of his memory. I have not seen Davies on the Celts but your high recommendation is sufficient to make me enquire after his book. I am truly happy that the Mabinogion go on—they are very curious & will probably let us more into the real state of Welch manners than these more serious pieces. Have you never observed that the natives in general set least value upon those traditional anecdotes or pieces of popular poetry which are of the greatest value to the inquisitive stranger or antiquary. Their being common has affixed to them an air of vulgarity in the eye of those who are habitually accustomed to hear them alluded to by the lower order & they can only be appreciated by viewing them through a medium divested of this degrading tint—I am dying to hear your queries & criticisms on Tristrem. Charlotte & I are *both* dying to learn when & where we are to see you in Caledonia. I hope Mrs. Ellis will clap a curb bridle upon her imagination—Ettrick's forest boasts finely shaped hills & clear romantick streams but alas! they are bare to wildness & denuded of the beautiful natu-

ral wood wt which they were former[ly] shaded It is mortifying to see that tho' wherever the sheep are excluded the natural copse has immediately sprung up in abundance so that inclosures only are wanting to restore the wood wherever it might be useful or ornamental yet hardly a proprietor has attempted to give it fair play for a resurrection Charlotte joins me in a thousand [compliments ? to] Mrs Ellis & you—Ever yours truly

W SCOTT

[PM 16th May 1804]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—I have your very wellcome favour, wellcome in every thing except that it announces new distress in your family in which I deeply sympathise, selfishly hoping however that circumstances will permit you in August or even in Sept<sup>r</sup> when we have still a right to expect good weather, to visit us in Ettricke fforest As you are a sportsman, in addition to other inducements I can promise you excellent grouse-shooting within a hundred yards of our mansion—Now for the substance of your letter & *firstly* of the *last* I hold myself deeply indebted to you for an introduction in Daniel Scotts behalf to so respectable a character as Mr Blackburn , & I sincerely hope he will endeavour to merit it When we meet I will explain to you how much I owe you on this account,<sup>2</sup> but the story is too long for a letter—I hope you have ere this received the uncastrated copy of Sir Tristrem,<sup>3</sup> wt which unless I have greatly forgot myself

<sup>1</sup> This letter is printed here for the first time The "new distress" is the illness of Admiral Parker, Mrs Ellis's only brother See Vol I, p 222, note

<sup>2</sup> This suggests that Scott may have told Ellis who Daniel was

<sup>3</sup> In his reply of 20th May Ellis remarks that though he has not received his own *uncastrated* copy, he has got Longman and Rees's copy He is "most marvellously" delighted with the introduction and notes , agrees

I packed up the transcript of *Lai le frein* by Leyden the less If I am mistaken, let me know, that I may rummage my papers as the transcript was actually made out & compared with the original I will set a proper person to work upon the "Seven wise Masters" of which (tho' very long) I think you ought to possess a complete copy as it is a very curious poem in the taste of the Oriental Romance, upon which & its characteristic difference from the European you owe us I think some notices I have a proper person in my eye for this task should young Leydens time be otherwise occupied—And now I must be *in petitorio* (as we say that practise the law) When you have time to write a page or two in the way of *critique* our Reviewers here are very desirous of possessing & editing your sentiments on Sir Tristrem which would also be very gratifying to me although upon my honour I should not have thought of making the request had

with the supposition that English was sooner used as a classical language in Scotland than in England, but languishes for '*farther evidence on this point*' without loss of time as Scott's opinion is of so much importance to the history of our early literature upon the whole I will venture to promise that your Sir Tristrem will be considered by the learned as equal in all the most essential qualities of Editorship to Macpherson's Wyntoun, while it bids fair to obtain the suffrages of the unlearned also, from the spirit & life of the introductory matter, the excellent abridgements prefixed to the several fitts, and the variety of amusement comprehended in the notes' He regrets that Scott has not given fuller treatment to the early Border minstrels and omitted to deal with an early question of rime on the subject of Clerk of Tranent He differs from Macpherson who considers that Clerk and Huchown were the same person, but Ellis thinks the latter was probably the author of 'some great gest of Gawain', and that to the former we are perhaps indebted for 'the masterly & poetical tale of Ywain & Gawain' Dunbar seems to me to mention Clerk of Tranent as an author not much anterior to his own time, & the style of Ywain & Gawain is such as would have by no means disgraced any of his contemporaries As Gawain was the favourite hero of two eminent Scottish *makers*, & at long intervals of time (Huchown having lived, if my conjecture be right, before the end of the 13th century) one is tempted to accede to Whitaker's supposition that he was a prince of Galloway, part of which, I suppose, originally belonged to the Strathclyud Britons" Ellis would like Scott's authority for having identified Bamborough Castle as the Castle Orgeillous of romance and Berwick as the Joyeuse garde of Sir Launcelot "I had always supposed that Sir Launcelot was a Frenchman and that his castles were in Armorica However I dare say that you are right"—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

Jeffrey the Editor not pressd it upon me Pray do not (if you comply with this request) suffer your friendship to biass your judgment but scourge heartily the numerous faults of *commisson* & *omission* as I shall be otherwise suspected of writing the review myself—at least by those who are stupid enough to confound such a stile as mine with that of the purest & most classical of our modern English writers. I intend to review Leydens scenes of infancy for this number & should be extremely glad to rank alongside with you In truth the Edinr Review is now so extensively<sup>1</sup> circulated & is so totally unconnected with every thing like a Booksellers job that with all its faults it is worth while to contribute something to keep it right & render it as liberal as it is ingenious & independent Jeffrey saw you in London he is a worthy as well as accomplishd man though he shows to disadvantage owing partly to a *croasement* in his voice, reminding one of the person who was supposed to have vomited three black crows, & partly to a scholastic & pedantic manner, but all these disadvantages soon vanish upon more intimate acquaintance—And now of your various doubts & queries—

As to Clerk of Tranent, I really can see no reason for identifying him with Hutcheon of the Awle Royale<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> 'Much has been written on 'Huchown' by several writers, but their rather intemperate claims leading to the assignment to 'Huchown' of about forty thousand lines of the extant alliterative Middle English verse, has been received unfavourably. The only reliable material on Huchown is what is in Wyntoun. That Huchown wrote the Pistill is possible, that he was Sir Hugh of Eglinton is unlikely, that he wrote any other of the M E pieces has been supported by no good evidence." John Edwin Wells, *op cit*, p 400

"And men of gud discretyowne  
Suld excuse and love Huchowne,  
That cunnand was in literature  
He made the Gret Gest off Arthure  
And the Awyntyre of Gawane  
The Pystyll off Swete Susare"

Andrew of Wyntoun *Orygynale Cronykyl*, II, 4321-4

See G Neilson, *Huchown of the Awle Ryale* (1902), and the columns of *The Athenaeum*, 1900, 1901

excepting the *gratis dictum* of Mr Macpherson, the former is quoted by Barbour—the latter lived as you conjecture with high probability not long prior to the age of Dunbar. The enquiry however lay a little out of my way especially as I was straitend for room. If Gawain was a prince of Gallovidia how do you account for his being killd at plymouth which the Welch traditions assert of Geraint? perhaps he may have travelld thither to Arthurs assistance, yet the legend seems inconsistent with Mr Whitakers position—Castle Orgeillous is thus identified with Bamborough. Froissart says that after the Battle of Durham David 2d of Scotland was conveyd by John Copeland who took him prisoner to a Castle called Chastel-Orgueilleux. Now it appears from Knighton that this Castle Orgueilleux was Bamborough “Rex Scociæ captus apud Meryngton per unum valettum Johannis Coupeland et ductus apud castellum de *Bamburgh* ibi[que] aliquamdiu moram traxit sub custodia domini de Percy &c.”<sup>1</sup> See the Annals apud annum 1346. I cannot give you so good authority for Berwick being the Joyeuse Garde having mislaid my notes on that subject though I am certain of the fact. Ban of Benoit or Benwyke is sometimes calld Ban of Berwyke he was you know the father of Sir Lancelot and an Armoican prince but the Joyeuse Garde was undoubtedly situated in Britain & might be held by him of King Arthur. I will endeavour to find my authority on this subject—I suspect it is in Camden. The omission of the Scottish Statutes to which I refer or rather meant to refer for authority about the Bards & Minstrels was very negligent. In the 6th parlt of James 3d 1471 chap 45 it is provided that none shall wear silk in doublet gown or cloak except Knights, Minstrells & Heralds unless the weaver can spend £100 a year of land rent.

<sup>1</sup> See *Chronicon Henrici Knighton, vel Cnutthor Monachi Leycestrensis*, ed J R Lumby Rolls Series, 2 vols (1889 95).

On 20th May, referring to p liv of the Introduction to *Sir Tristrem*, Ellis points out that Scott has not given from what authority he quotes the passage about the Scottish or Gaelic bards being treated with contempt—



The correspondg Statute was enacted in the 14 parlt of James 2d 1457 chap 79 providing that the Justices shall take inquisition of Sornares (persons taking meat or drink by violence) *bairdes*, masterful beggars & feigned fools Now I hold the Bard here to be the Celtic poet or Beirdh & the Minstrel to be the Anglo-Scottish reciter & musician In Hollands Houlat<sup>1</sup> written during the reign of James 2d both are introduced The passage respecting the Irish Beirdh is quoted in Sir Tristrem He is represented by the rook a voracious & clamorous character, while the Minstrels of the assembly are the thrush, the *Merle*, the Blackbird or ouzel the Starling the Lark and the nightingale who sing with great decorum a solemn hymn to the virgin It appears to me that this distinction betwixt the bard and Minstrel has escaped most of our Antiquaries Leyden in particularly [*sic*] uses the terms as synonymous though the language of these two several classes of poets as well as the degree of estimation in which they were held must have differed widely When I say that the Minstrels founded many of the tales on the traditions of the neglected & despised Bards, I do not mean to refer to any particular piece of poetry translated from the Celtic into the English

“ the minstrels who used the English language, and had, in fact, founded many of their tales upon the traditions of the neglected and oppressed bards, were ranked with knights & heralds, and permitted to wear silk robes, a dress limited to persons who could spend £100 land rent ” Ellis doubts whether there are many romances founded on the tales of Gaelic bards, who seem to be the persons particularly alluded to it would certainly be worth while to give your authority (I presume some ancient statute) for the distinctions granted to the professors of English poetry at that early period ”—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot* Scott's references here to the Statutes are evidently to *Laws and Acts of Parliament, 1424 1681*, by Sir Thomas Murray of Glendook (the 1682 duodecimo edition), in which edition Par 6 of James III, 1471, chap 45, equals chap 7 in the Record edition and Par 14 of James II 1457, chap 79, equals chap 26 in the Record edition See *Acts of the Parliaments of Scotland 1421-1707*, revised edition (1908), pp ix, vii respectively For the allusions in *The Buke of the Howlat* to which Scott refers see stanzas lxii, lxiiv in that work as printed by the Bannatyne Club in 1823 with Scott's MS notes in the Appendix, pp 9, 10

<sup>1</sup> See Vol VIII, p 97 and note It is an allegorical poem

which as the former language was rarely written, it may be now difficult to find, but I mean that the general train of the English metrical romance is founded upon the British traditions respecting Arthur & his heroes & consequently derived from the traditions of the Bards by whom these histories were doubtless preserved And these [*sic*] brings me to the little adminicles of evidence which I suppressed in the dissertation for the sake of conciseness

I In such of our metrical romances on the story of Arthur as are not translated from the French, the scene is laid on the Borders & chiefly on the western Border Merry Carleil is repeatedly mentioned & is as I have mentiond in the dissertation quoted by Froissart as being beloved of Arthur Tearn-Wadling a small lake near Hesketh in Cumberland is mentiond in several of the metrical Romances In that of Sir Gawaines marriage the enchanted Castle of the Grim Baron is situated by Tearne Wadling—Percy's Reliques 351 3d v In Gawan & Gologras<sup>1</sup> the beginning runs

In the tyme of Arthur an aunter betvdde  
By the *Turnewathalan*, as the boke telles  
When he to Carlele was comen & conqueror kydde

The common people have still a sort of respect for this small lake & pretend that in clear weather you can see in the bottom of it the ruins of an ancient town or castle So far poetical & local tradition seem to travel hand in hand & to give an authenticity & originality to these English tales of Arthur as having been actually composed in the country honored by his occasional residence Again near Penrith we have a round enclosure apparently for the purposes of martial exercise which is

<sup>1</sup> Should be "Sir Gawan and Sir Galaron of Galloway" "Gawan and Gologras" begins differently

In the tyme of Arthur, as trew men me tald,  
The king turnit on ane tyde towart *Teskane*

PINARTON, *Scottish Poems* (1792), vol. III, p. 68

called Arthur's round table We have a sort of Historical evidence that Arthur visited Reged Nennius or his friend Samuel informs us that he deposited a piece of the true cross in the Church of St Maries in *Wedale* This We-dale (*vallis sanctus*) is the vale of the Gala & the Church of St Maries was situated in the village of Stowe The Gala joins the Tweed above Melrose & at their junction the famous Catrail is first discovered <sup>1</sup>—I think I also mentiond to you my opinion that Arthur had either as an ally or a conqueror penetrated into the Kingdom of the Picts so many traces being found concerning him & Dame Ganore at Meigle in Strathmore where the burial place of the latter & her monument are pretended to be shewn These circumstances tend to shew that the Border minstrels had ready at their hand and in their own land the traditions which have hitherto been supposed to be altogether borrowd from the Anglo-Norman *rimeurs*

II The Kingdom of Strath Clwyd after resigning its independance continued to be a separate though tributary principality down to 1018 when Ewan the Bald apparently the last Regulus of Strath Clwyd attended Malcolm II in the battle of Carham fought against the English But though the Britons of Reged ceased to be a kingdom they continued to exist for at least 150 years as a people distinguishd in laws & manners from the Scottish nation <sup>2</sup> See one of their laws *De Cro* in the regiam *Majestatem* Also Macphersons Scottish Geography v Strath Clwyd—Now if it be proved on the one hand from the concurring tenor of romance & popular tradition that Arthur occasionally visited the Walenses of Strath Clwyd &

<sup>1</sup> Mr Curle informs us that "this is not quite correct The Catrail begins at Torwoodlee, a mile or 2 miles farther north"

<sup>2</sup> For an almost exact reproduction of all this see Ellis's *Early English Metrical Romances* (1805), 1, pp 118-19 For the law of "De Cro" see *Regiam Majestatem* (1609), the fourth Buke, chap 36 fol 73, "Cro or Assythment for Slauchter"—and Ellis, *op cit*, 1, p 121, note "Macphersons Scottish Geography" is David Macpherson's *Geographical Illustrations of Scottish History, etc* (1796), which see for "Strat clud-wallani, etc"

Cumbria & on the other that the Bretts continued to be a separate people perhaps down to 1200 it seems natural that the exploits of this renowned general should have been at least as fresh in the memory of the borderers as of the Armoricans & that as the French *rimeurs* drew their materials from the latter Thomas of Erceldoune Kendale & Hutcheon should have used the purer source of Celtic tradition accessible in their own country Q E D Much more might be added on this subject but I have given you the outline I have often searched for a Statute of David quoted by Scot of Satchels

In the second Session of King Davids parliament  
There was a Statute made which is yet extant  
That no man should presume to buy or sell  
With hieland men or Scots of Ewsdale

But when these Scots did bear that stile  
King David resided in Carlisle  
With out- and in-fang they disturbd his court  
Which caused the king that act set out—<sup>1</sup>

I cannot find this statute in our printed records—it must exist among the mass in the Register Office—for Satchels was not a man capable of forgery as he could neither read nor write, besides this Statute makes against his own argument & he only quotes it to prove it could not apply to his clan—Were the Scots thus degraded & excommunicated from social intercourse some remnants of the genuine Britons?—Here is a very long letter and what is worse no one in the way to frank it so it will cost you considerably beyond its value

Let me know on what points you would wish me to prose it farther—Pray ought you not before closing the romance work [to] get a peep if possible at Bishop Percy[s] Ms which is said to contain several and all in verse—and should you not enquire after Ritsons history of King

<sup>1</sup> See *A true History of several Honourable Families of the Right Honourable Name of Scot, etc* By Captain Walter Scot (1688, repr 1776)—“Watts Bellanden Now follows the Antiquity of the Name of Scot” p 29, lines 5 8, 13-16

Arthur<sup>1</sup> Who bought the little man[’s] Mss —Love to  
Mrs Ellis from Charlotte & me Yours truly W SCOTT

EDINR 27 May 1804

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

DEAR ELLIS,<sup>2</sup>—You will see from the complection of my wax & paper that I have like you sustained a family loss, and indeed it was one which, though the course of nature led me to expect it, did not take place at last without considerable pain to my feelings I allude to the death of an old Bachelor Uncle a man of universal benevolence & great kindness towards his friends & to me individually His manners were so much tinged with the habits of celibacy as to render them peculiar though by no means displeasing & his profession (that of a seaman) gave a high colouring to the whole The arrangement of his affairs & the distribution of his small fortune among his relatives will devolve in a great measure on me He has distinguishd me by leaving me a beautiful little villa on the Banks of Tweed with every possible convenience annexd to it & about 30 acres of the finest land in Scotland Notwithstanding the temptation however that his bequest offers I continue to pursue my *Reged* plan & hope to be settld at Ashestiel in the course of a

<sup>1</sup> On 6th June Ellis, while conceding that Percy’s folio contains many curious fragments, conceives that it would be difficult to understand them, and, except for internal evidence, there is no guide to date the respective poems “Besides, Bishop Percy having sucked the marrow, it is very doubtful whether the oil obtainable from the bones by chemical analysis would pay for the labour of the process” He has seen Ritson’s *Arthur*, which is “principally filled with abuse on Bishop Percy, Pinkerton, & Warton,” besides long dissertations about the Goths and Celts, but very few anecdotes about Arthur, not “having formed for himself or having enabled his reader to form any consistent opinion on the subject”—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

<sup>2</sup> A fragment of this letter, with some alterations and rearrangements, is printed from *Lockhart* in Vol I, pp 223 4 The last two sentences there Lockhart has taken from a later letter and affixed without comment On 6th June Ellis had announced Admiral Parker’s death Scott’s uncle, Capt Robert Scott, has also died

month I hope you will soon be able to give us, if it were but a Pisgah glimpse of a possibility of seeing you there soon I am sure that if you can with propriety leave the good old Admiral a tour to Scotland by the Lakes would have the best possible effects upon Mrs Ellis' spirits depressed as I know they must now be

The Review<sup>1</sup> which you have so kindly undertaken will come most speedily & safely to hand by sending it as a parcel by the Mail Coach wrapt in strong paper for fear of chafing & addressd to *Francis Jeffrey Esq Advocate Queen Street Edinburgh* The said Arch Critic is greatly flattered by your compliance & hopes it will be convenient for you to finish it before the 12th I do not intend to meddle with Ritsons Romances untill yours appear as the two articles may be made to depend upon each other, without the necessity of repetitions which would otherwise be unavoidable As for the matter of Clerk of Tranent

<sup>1</sup> Of *Sir Tristrem* for *The Edinburgh Review* On 6th June Ellis still adheres to his view that Scott has been "much too scanty" on Clerk of Tranent and Huchown "For this you may be assured that 'without suffering my friendship to bias my judgement, I shall scourge you heartily'" The want of evidence respecting Castel Orgueilleux is "also very sinful" proof of the identity of Berwick and Joyeuse Garde ought to be brought forward somewhere Scott's distinction between minstrels and bards has been quite 'unnoticed by former antiquaries I also much admire the whole chain of reasoning by which you have proved (or at least rendered highly probable) a fact respecting our language which I always felt disposed to believe' Ellis has found puzzling contradictions when investigating the early history of 'the Strathclyde Britons' It seems generally understood that the Northern Britons were not completely secluded from their Southern countrymen till about the year 670, and as Bede was born about 696, it is odd he does not give "more accurate knowledge of the Strathclyde or at least of the Cumbrian Britons" In connexion with the law of *De cro*, Ellis wishes to find out if "*the earlier policy* of the Scottish & other conquerors of the Strathclyde Britons appears to have been the same as that adopted by Malcolm & William in the 12th century?" If so, it is likely they would "adopt a common language with their neighbours, & communicate to them their ancient traditions What was the probable cause of the cession of Cumberland to Malcolm I by Edmund son of Athelstan?" I have written a most pressing letter to Longman & Rees requesting them to turn over every parcel in their shop till they discover *Lai le frayn*, though they swore to me till they were black in the face that they were sure that they had received nothing but three books If Scott can get 'seven wise masters' copied, it will be a great acquisition, but Ellis would have preferred an abstract by Scott himself —MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

I shall as Burns says "meekly give my huries to the smiter"—I have a most startled and anxious letter from N & O it seems they have sent you a wrong copy of Sir Tristrem & sold your uncastrated copy to the Lord knows whom. I will endeavour to rectify this error by procuring you another from some one who will value it less. Lay le frayn was certainly in that parcel, but that loss is easily remedied & you may expect it with as much of the seven wise Masters as is ready by any conveyance which you chuse to point out as I have quite enough of N & O,<sup>1</sup> considered as middle-men. I have lost your address in London. Pray have you heard if Douce Heber Park Etc have gotten their copies & what Douce says to our hypothesis. I am afraid I shall have all the Antiquaries in England on my shoulders for the impudence of claiming an earlier origin for the Scottish than the English language.

The law de Cro regulates the *assythment*, or *bloodwit* to be paid by a homicide according to the rank of the persons slain. It is in the Regiam Maj Lib IV Ch 36. Skene says that these laws are consuetudinary, that he has seen them written in Gallice (in french I suppose) & that they are entitled *Leges inter Brettos et Scotos*. They contain several Celtic words as Cro, kelchyn, galnes, & the like. The ancient Charters respecting Cumberland & Dumfriesshire are likewise full of Celtic or British terms. From these facts of the Laws betwixt the Brets & Scotts being translated into French & of the British customs being inserted in feudal Investitures I think we may argue for such a conjunction of manners as might readily lead to the interchange of political tradition, which is of a nature so much more transferable than legal institutions. And now

"The prince of Cumberland—that is a step  
On which I must fall down or overleap—" <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> He seems to mean 'Norton' and 'Owen' i.e. Norton Longman and Owen Rees

<sup>2</sup> *Macbeth*, Act I, Sc 4

In fact I must pass it for the present as a hard chapter, but I will make all the enquiries I can upon the subject & may perhaps make some discovery If I cannot get you an uncastrated copy of Sir Tristrem Ballantyne will reprint the leaf with pleasure, so do not bind up your volume as it will only make a cancel I think your apology for not being anxious about Percy very satisfactory He has taken under his protection a certain Miss Stuart here who has written a flaming ode in his praise I am really afraid the venerable prelate doats a little at least as Gil Blas says the Ode smells a little of the Apoplexy As for Miss Stuart

Her mother selleth ale by the Town walls  
And her, her dear Parthenope she calls <sup>1</sup>

Par My Mother, Sir, sells Ale by the Town walls,  
And me, her dear Parthenope she calls

—Buckingham, *The Rehearsal* (1671), Act III, Sc v

In a letter to Percy of May 21st 1803 Robert Anderson writes from Heriot Green the frequent perusal of the copy of the Reliques you presented to me, and a desire to please me, have produced an admirable Ode from the pen of Miss Stewart It does my venerable friend and the fair writer infinite honour On June 27 he inquires how it may best be sent and transcribes some stanzas It is splendidly printed, he reports on January 24th 1804, on an imperial quarto, as the booksellers will have it, though I preferred a common quarto Does your Lordship wish any particular number of copies to be sent to Dromore House? On May 6th he writes, 'It is at length printed in a superb folio A copy is in the Signet Library *Ode to Dr Thomas Percy, Lord Bishop of Dromore occasioned by reading the Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* Edinburgh, printed for Mundell and Son, and for Longman and Rees London 1804 Anderson tells Percy later that he has sent copies to various people Mr Scott, in a letter to me, desires his respectful acknowledgements to your Lordship for a present which (I copy his words) I value equally for the donor, the subject, and the poetry" Scott's compliments to donors and authors were sometimes, I fear, more polite than sincere Who Miss Stewart was I have not found Scott calls her "Adeline and suggests a humble origin Percy in a letter to Malone calls her Miss Jessy Stewart (MS Malone 39f 179) I owe this reference and the calling of my attention to the correspondence in Nicholas *Illustrations*, Vol VII to Professor Jensen, University of Maine *The British Critic* (July 1803) says "The author dedicates to Dr Anderson, and signs himself J S We have called the book folio, but it may be quarto for the sheets have no signatures and the shape is equivocal It is Dr Anderson who seems to have been fascinated by Miss Stewart rather than Percy who never saw her



Only for Parthenope we should read Adeline—I proceed *doucement* with the Lay of the Last Minstrel—

I hope to hear from you very soon & that the cloud which hangs over your prospects will be by that time dispersed Charlotte desires kindest remembrance to Mrs Ellis & deeply sympathises in her distress Ever yours truly W S

EDINBURGH 13 June 1804

On looking at Longman & Rees letter I observe they wish the castrated leaf to be reprinted, which is handsomely proposed

[Pierpont Morgan]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

ASHESTIEL SELKIRK BY BERWICK

21st August 1803 [1804]

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—I have your two kind letters to answer as well as to return you my very best and most grateful acknowledgements for the critique in the Edinr Review of which however I have only seen a part Judge Jefferies who presides over that tribunal was quite delighted with it and I am impatiently expecting to see it *ad*

<sup>1</sup> This letter is dated by Scott 21st August, 1803. Another hand has written 1804, and this is borne out by the postmark as well as by the references to his uncle's death. Lockhart for some reason or other says, "On the 1st of August he writes to Ellis and goes on to give some sentences altered and condensed regarding the flitting to Ashestiel. Later, referring to the same letter, Lockhart says that Scott 'answers, August 21,' and he gives the extracts as printed in Vol I, pp 226-7. For part of Ellis's letter of 4th July, to which and another Scott here replies, see note in Vol I, pp 230-31. In corroboration of what Ellis there says about the insufficient copies of *Sir Tristram*, Robert Jamieson writes to Scott on 19th October that he has seen the book in Longman's shop, 'where, I am sorry to say, I was obliged to let it remain. I am persuaded, had the impression been 4 times as numerous, & sold for half a guinea a copy, it would have answered full as well to the Bookseller, & served the other end of its publication much better. Those who wish to encourage a taste for Scottish Antiquity in Scotland, should make their publications, so far as is practicable, accessible to the Literati of the Country, who are mostly married men and poor. You must not be offended at my splenetic reflections on this subject. They are surely very pardonable in a poor Antiquary.'—*Walpole Collection*

*longum* <sup>1</sup> 3dly I had to arrange matters for the sale of another really delightful villa upon the Tweed near Kelso which devolved to me by my uncles death Unfortunately it is situated so near the village as hardly to be sufficiently a country residence besides it is hemmd in by hedges & ditches not to mention Dukes & Lady Dowagers all which are bad things for little people It is expected to sell to very great advantage & I shall buy a mountain farm with the purchase money & be quite the Laird of the Cairn & the Scaur <sup>2</sup> I am glad that,—since we must give up the hope of seeing you here this autumn which we resign with the greatest reluctance, the time is to be employd in bringing forward the romances which I languish to behold—If you want any more transcripts it is but ask & have—it must have been a very blackguard trick of anyone who purchased your copy of Sir Tristrem to keep it with your name on the title page as well as the packet with Lay le fraim I have lighted upon a very good amanuensis for copying any of these matters, he was sent down here by some of the London Booksellers in a half starved state but begins to pick up a little —The Lay of the last Minstrel is quite finishd and in Ballantynes hands—I should have liked very much to have had appropriate embellishments <sup>3</sup> By next India ships we shall be looking out anxiously for news of Leyden—his absolute silence is quite incomprehensible & must I think have been owing to his having trusted a great packet of letters to some private hand <sup>4</sup> Remember Charlotte & me most kindly to Mrs Ellis &

<sup>1</sup> For the omitted sentences from "Having had" to "banks of the Esk" see Vol I, p 224

<sup>2</sup> For omitted portion from '4thly, I had to go' to 'the least idea of' see Vol I, pp 224 5

<sup>3</sup> For the omitted portion from 'I should have liked' to "both with him and with it" see Vol I, pp 226 27 For further on the "half starved" amanuensis see note to letter to Ellis, 1st July 1807, pp 290-2

<sup>4</sup> For the next passage from 'I am just about to set out' to "another on the stocks?" see Vol I, p 227

the Admiral, since multa gemens I must renounce the honor of seeing [you] here <sup>1</sup>

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

EDINR 23d Novr 1804

MY DEAR ELLIS,—The sight of your hand after so long an interval of silence so unusual too upon your side gave me the most sincere pleasure but I would rather ten thousand times have had grounds for scolding your negligence than been compelled to admit so valid an apology as your long indisposition <sup>2</sup>

Constable who from diffidence had thrown off a very limited impression (150 I believe) endeavoured to repair the injustice he had done his own pocket at the expence of those of others & hence the extravagant price of the work with which no one was more displeased than I was Your calculation about Hugh de Morville is also most correct—it is actually a ray of light which had been unable to penetrate my numscull while I was engaged with Tomas Our critics here have not as yet taken much notice either of Sir Tristrem or the theory connected with it—I observe the latter is attacked (very temperately & civilly) by the last No of the Critical Review The critic appears to be

<sup>1</sup> For the concluding sentence see Vol I, p 227 “The Admiral” here must mean Sir Peter Parker as Mrs Ellis’s brother had died in June, see p 258, note 2

<sup>2</sup> For the omitted part from “I fear you fall” to “brought to the ground” and for what follows immediately, beginning “I am sorry” to “as reasonable a charge as I could make,” see Vol I, pp 229 31 The ‘long indisposition’ Scott mentions was Ellis’s dangerous illness of seven weeks, as reported by Ellis on 10th November, when he says he fears that Owen’s countrymen ‘have taken hold of him & diverted him from the pursuit of the Mabinogion to some of their stupid grave reveries What I hope is, that his Mabinogion will induce Irish antiquaries to give us also such of their tales as still remain’ Mrs Ellis now rides every day “upon a donkey, upon a machine the skeleton of which is a common pack saddle, but which by the skilful decoration of a London sadler is transformed into an excellent armchair”—MS 873, *Nat Lib Scot*

a Welchman or of that faction—perhaps Owen<sup>1</sup> or Sharon Turner I hope in providence the former will return to the Mabinogion which to me are far the most interesting part of Welch literature although in all probability the natives will never value them till like the Sibels [*sic*] books two thirds of them are lost

Ten thousand thanks to you for your kind attention to Daniel Scotts Interests—the climate he must encounter, it is a melancholy issue but I hope he will endeavour to guard himself against its effects by temperance & prudence I sincerely hope & trust he will exert himself so as to give Mr Blackburne satisfaction & endeavour on his own account to merit his protection As he has been in North America<sup>2</sup> I have hopes that he may be in some degree seasoned to a Trans-Atlantic climate, though no doubt there is [a] great difference even betwixt the southern parts of the United States and the West Indian Islands

While we talk of friends abroad I must [not] conceal from you that I begin to be highly indignant at Leydens conduct He has written a very short line to his father but to no other human being that I can hear of—I hope he will be able very well to account for what at present I must think a most extraordinary silence

Charlotte is very anxious to hear how the Donkey answers her friend Mrs Ellis, as she thinks of some such scheme for herself next summer Our gig can only travel in one direction being separated from the High road by a deep ford so that her airings are confined to one line of march In compensation you may travel over the hills in any direction you please there being no inclosures but their steepness would appal a much bolder rider than your little friend A Mule or Ass were it not the pro-

<sup>1</sup> William Owen, for whom see Vol I, p 147 and note The date of his letter mentioned there should be 12th August

Early letters, now in the Nat Lib Scot, show that Scott's family had friends or connections settled in Charleston Daniel had probably been sent there earlier

verbal obstinacy of these noted families would quite suit Charlotte & if Mrs Ellis' monture continues to give satisfaction she will probably follow so good an example I am truly happy the experiment has already succeeded in its most material point & conduces to the re-establishment of Mrs Ellis' health How happy we shall be when you both feel stout enough & enjoy sufficient leisure to come to Reged I have left that Celtic region for the present to attend the courts here but as I have every reason to like my quarters there I will certainly resume them early in Spring—Once more all good things attend you Charlotte joins in kindest Compliments to Mrs E Remember us to the learned Heber when you see him I presume [*line cut away*] by all I hear merits a much [*line cut away*] We are all dying for the Romances Can I do any thing for you here

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,—I am inexpressibly obliged to you & Mr Blackburn for your attention to poor Daniel Scott<sup>1</sup> who I hope will endeavour to repay it by strict attention to the duties of his situation so as to do some credit to your kind recommendation We have not heard from him personally I hope the climate may finally suit him better than appearances promise, it is surely but of late that Jamaica has been so very unhealthy Apropos of travellers John of Leyden has at length been heard of, he wrote a

<sup>1</sup> Writing from Canning's, "South hill," on 3rd December 1804 Ellis quotes from Blackburn's letter of 1st October, "'Mr Scott has at length appeared He seems to be a well informed, decent, and modest young man, but of the very worst possible habit of body for this climate I have sent him to *Grange Hill* one of Perrin's estates in Manchioneal he will have every opportunity of learning all that concerns the agriculture of this country, as well as the *business* of an estate His employer's name is Francis Graham, nephew of Charles Graham, of the house of Davidson & Graham I am thus particular, because these are all circumstances respecting which his family & friends will probably be glad of information'"—*MS 873, Nat Lib Scot*

long letter to his father <sup>1</sup> which I saw, giving an account of his voyage and success in India. He was first appointed to the Hospital but is now physician & naturalist to the Mysore survey with an appointment of £1000<sup>0</sup> per ann—he tells his father that he travels with a suite of attendants not less than that of Johnie Armstrong and is saluted by the astonished Natives with the title of Bahauder or Warrior. Certainly pen & ink must be great rarities in that same country of the Mysore or else the Bahauder has lost the use of his fingers by the stroke of a sabre or creese. He proposes in very affectionate terms to make some provision for his aged parents—

The Lay of the Last Minstrel is now ready for publication & will probably be <sup>2</sup> in Longman & Rees hands shortly after this comes to yours. I have charged them to send you a copy by the first and best conveyance and will be impatient to learn whether you think the entire piece corresponds to that which you have already seen. I destine a copy also for Heber, but he by dint of being every where is usually no-where so I will e'en desire it to be sent to Westminster though I suppose he will spend his Christmas somewhere in the country <sup>3</sup>. This will

<sup>1</sup> From Madras, 23rd March 1804, in which he states that his salary "amounts to above (£1000) one thousand pounds *per annum* which is reckoned very great for a Surgeon in his first three years of service," but expenses are very great as his establishment consists of about 50 persons to whom I pay wages. If you figure to yourself Johny Armstrong and his merry men you will have no bad idea of my retinue. I have always a guard of spearmen on foot accordingly in addressing us they always term us *Bahader* which means '*great warrior*'. I have no fear of succeeding in India to my wish, and have found every thing extremely agreeable. Touching on the manners of the Indians, he goes on 'their learning books &c are extremely curious—though their religion is very indecent'—*Morton Collection*. In Ellis's reply of 9th January 1805, after thanking Scott for the pleasing intelligence about Leyden, he adds 'when he becomes a little more satiated with grandeur, he will return to all his old literary habits'—*MS 873 Nat Lib Scot*.

<sup>2</sup> 'By' written, we amend

<sup>3</sup> For omitted portion from 'I would also fain' to 'we must wait the thaw' see Vol I, pp 231 32. It is dated there Dec 30 but the original bears no date. Lockhart in a note in the MS says "In answer to G. E. s Dec 3 1804 probably Jan 4 1805". He changed his mind in the *Life* and

be no weather for Mrs Scotts donkey experiment—pray does Donkey require any breaking or do his talents like those of reading & writing come by nature I enquire because I fear our great adjutant & potent equi domitor Col Leatham would hardly allow his school to be contaminated by the entry of our long eared freind

The necessity of preparing for our journey interrupts me Believe me always truly yours

W S

[4th January 1805]

Mrs Scott sends kindest compliments of the season to Mrs Ellis

[Pierpont Morgan]

TO RICHARD HEBER, MRS HEBERS, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

DEAR HEBER,—Neither you nor I like letter-writing and it is humbly to be hoped we do not love each other less because we do not weekly & monthly nor even yearly exchange a long epistle produced at the expence of racking our brains & toiling our fingers I have now however *something* to say which is to request you will enquire at Longman & Rees (for I can never remember all the rest of their name) about a copy of the Lay of the last Minstrel which is now on its road to town I remember there was a mistake in your not receiving the Border Ballads when first published It will give me great pleasure if you like the story when in print as much as you seemed to do in Ms, it lay long by after I saw you in London & was very hastily finished last Spring And how does Reginald come on & what are his studies? I hope there is no early chance of his getting Church preferment but rather that he points to the Bar It would be a sin to sink him in a prebend nay I would not so far sacrifice his eternal

says definitely 'On the 30th December he resumes—' The *Lay* is now ready &c ' It depends a little on whether Scott is setting out from Edinburgh or from Mertoun where he generally spent Christmas

interests (I mean the interests of his eternal renown not of his soul) to his temporal, as even to wish him a bishop—Literary news we have little among us—Thomson is rummaging out old Acts of Parliament<sup>1</sup> to give the world a specimen of how a Diplomatory collection should be published—he will execute the task in a most capital stile—Leyden has written to his father he is physician & naturalist to the Mysore Survey with an appointment of £1000 a year—I am astonished to the last degree at not hearing from him<sup>2</sup>—I have still some books of yours Sir

<sup>1</sup> In April 1804 Thomas Thomson had been appointed Sub-Commissioner in the management and publication of the Scottish Parliamentary Records. He went to London in October 1805. "His mornings were filled in hunting after Scotch parliamentary matter in the London record offices, in examining MSS in the British Museum." Eventually he became Deputy Clerk Register in June 1806. See C. Innes, *Memoir of Thomas Thomson* (1854), pp. 55, 61, 97.

<sup>2</sup> Leyden writes to Scott from Pooloo Penang on 20th November 1805. For fifteen months he has been ill with the spleen and fever. "I conjure you by all things dead or alive to write me if it were only to tell me how you are and what you are doing. I have written so often and sent such parcels to you and Heber that I have now given up all hope and prepared myself a bath of lime juice. If I die of this I have ordered myself to be scalped and the scalp to be sent to be hung up in your cottage as proof positive that you have brought down my grizzled head with sorrow to the grave. My friend W. Erskine writes me from Bombay that no letters have ever been received from me in Scotland at all. This has filled me with vexation in the very idea. True, for seven months he (Leyden) has been unable to sit at a table or hold a pen, but he has sent numerous packets both before and since. 'To be sure I have no means of ascertaining that any of them were ever embarked.' On the other hand, he has received no letters from Europe except one from Erskine before he left Edinburgh. 'I am ashamed to have written so far without enquiring for the good, the kind, the sweet, the dear Mrs Scott. I am ready to cry when I think of her. Good God what I would give—I would swim the Annan though I don't swim any more than a stone—to have the pleasure of drinking tea with her again and astonishing her tea pot.' Although he has had many invitations from, and correspondence with, Charles Carpenter, he has never got within a hundred miles of him. 'I sent him the Minstrelsy soon after my arrival.

I wrote to congratulate him on his marriage just before I left Malabar. Well God bless you all. I wish I could pay you a morning visit for I have no idea of leaving India for this long & many a day.' He is receiving great attention from the little Scottish colony, and through Miss Wedderburne has seen ten numbers of *The Edinburgh Review*,<sup>u</sup> perilous combustible stuff all of it. I despoiled your hand in an instant and am particularly delighted with the review of Thornton's Sporting Tour. The [Edin



Tristrem & his father King Meliadus also Richard sans peur, will you let me know how they will reach you safely

I have taken a beautiful little wild farm in Ettrick forest where I spend the summer months when our Courts are up Is there any hope of seeing you there, this summer—Ellis meditates an expedition Why should you not come all together, we have plenty of Houseroom Ellis gives a poor account both of his own health & Mrs E's I hope in God there is no danger of either, I know no man whose loss I should regret more deeply both for the qualities of head & heart—I often think of our Oxford party with much pleasure—how much I should like again to visit that seat of the Muses, especially with the same *passe-par-tout* Once again pray read the Lay & let me know what you & your brothers & your poetical friends think of it Remember me kindly to Reginald & Tom Charlotte sends her kind love & I am ever Dear Heber Yours unalterably

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 7th [PM *January*] 1805 Apropos of dates a good new Year to you—

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—Your favour of the 9th deserved a much speedier answer since it conveyed to me the flattering approbation with which Mr Frere honours

burgh] Review I must tell you has filled all India with horror and stifled [*sic*] in embryo more publications than you can readily guess Now pray my Dear Friend write me largely and do not wait for receiving regular letters there is no earthly possibility of restoring an interrupted correspondence here and both our letters will be apt to miscarry"—*MS 939, Nat Lib Scot* For Scott's reply, 5th July 1806, see Vol I, p 305

<sup>1</sup> Some sentences of this letter, with omissions and corrections by Lockhart of Sir Walter's *Scottisms*, are in Vol I, pp 233 4 We have thought it best to reprint the interesting letter complete

the imitation of Sir Tristrem<sup>1</sup>, he is so perfect a master of the ancient stile of composition that I would rather have his suffrage than that of a whole synod of vulgar antiquaries. The more I think on our system of the origin of Romance the more simplicity and uniformity it seems to possess & though I adopted it late and with hesitation I believe I will never see cause to abandon it. Yet I am aware of the danger of attempting to *prove* where proofs are but scanty & probable suppositions must be placed in lieu of them, I think the Welch antiquaries have considerably injured their very high claims to confidence by attempting to detail very remote events with all the accuracy belonging to the facts of yesterday. You will have one of them describe you the cut of Lwarch Hen's<sup>2</sup> beard or the whittle of Urien Reged with as much accuracy as if he had trim'd the one or cut his cheese with the other. These high pretensions weaken greatly our belief in the Welch poems which probably contain real treasures. It is a pity some sober-minded man will not take the trouble to sift the chaff from the wheat and give us a good account of their manuscripts and traditions distinguishing as far as possible the different degree of credit to be attached to each piece. And while on this

<sup>1</sup> On 9th January Ellis introduces what Frere has written to him "I am only sorry that Scott has not (and I am sure he has not) told us the whole of his creed upon the subject of Tomas & the other Scotch minstrels. I suppose he was afraid of the critics & determined to say very little more than he was able to establish by incontestable proofs. But still, I feel infinitely obliged to him for what he has told us, and I have no hesitation in saying that I consider Sir Tristrem as by far the most interesting work that has yet been published on the subject of our earliest poets, and indeed such a piece of literary antiquity as no one, a priori, could have supposed to exist." This is Frere our Ex ambassador from Spain, whom you would delight to know.

It is remarkable that you were, I believe, the *most ardent* of all the admirers of his old English version of the Saxon ode, and he is per contra, the warmest panegyrist of your conclusion which he can repeat by heart, and affirms to be the very best imitation of old English at present existing  
—MS 873, Nat Lib Scot

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Llywarch Hen, or the Aged (496?-646?), the British chieftain and bard, and Urien (fl. 570), the British prince, historically "Urbgen," prince of part of North Britain. See *DNB* and Scott's *Sir Tristrem* (1804), p. 266

subject pray what are become of the Mabinogion from which we anticipated so much amusement and information I hope they are not to be exchanged for learned speculations on the Triads Ovidions<sup>1</sup> and Gorsedds—it is an usual proverb that children and fools talk truth and I am mistaken [if] even the same valuable quality may not sometimes be extracted out of the tales made to entertain both

I presume while we talk of childish & foolish tales that the *Lay* is already with you although in these points *Longmanum est eriare*—pray enquire after your copy if you have not received it—I expect with impatience that you will report progress in the romances in order to give me an opportunity of displaying in the *Edin Review* all my little learning on that favourite subject Apropos a whimsical incident has occurred in the conduct of that work—a poem was published here anonymously entitled *Sabbath*<sup>2</sup> containing some very good presbyterian poetry on that subject—the editor of the review took it into

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Ovyddions See E Jones, *Musical and Poetical Relicks of the Welsh Bards* (new ed 1794), p 85, footnote

<sup>2</sup> For Grahame's *Sabbath* see Vol I, p 236 and note Poor Grahame had certainly some reason to be pained by Jeffrey's review in the *Edinburgh* for January 1805 He allows some genius and hopes the author is a young man, but he accuses him of borrowing his opening lines (describing the quiet of a Sunday morning) from an unpublished sonnet by Leyden and sums up "The greater part of it is written in a heavy and inelegant manner The diction throughout is tainted with vulgarity, and there is no selection of words, images, or sentiments, to conciliate the favour of the fastidious reader The author has evidently some talents for poetical composition, and is never absolutely absurd, tedious, or silly but he has no delicacy of taste or imagination he does not seem to feel the force of the sanction against poetical mediocrity, and his ear appears to have no perception of the finer harmony of versification" The final paragraph, however, shows that poor Grahame's political sentiments have jaundiced the eye of the critic "The volume has nothing but its poetical merit to stand upon It contains a good deal of doctrine and argumentation but nothing that is not either very trite or very shallow and extravagant He dogmatizes on the character of Bonaparte, and on the most adviseable plan for recruiting the British army, and seems as perfectly persuaded of his own infallibility upon all these subjects, as his readers, we apprehend, must be of his insufficiency The whole publication is respectably executed, and may be considered as very creditable, either to a beginner, or to one who does not look upon poetry as his primary vocation

his head that the author was as he expressed it some old clergyman with a grizell wig, whereas in fact it happened to be a specially intimate friend of his own, who good easy man, confiding in the popularity of his subject and poem chose strictly to preserve the incognito in hopes of receiving unbiassed praise from our Aristarchus. But the fates had determined otherwise, for the Reviewer under the persuasion which I have mentioned fell foul of the poem of the supposed divine & gave it a most handsome drubbing. The disappointed author then announced himself and an awkward enough explanation became necessary betwixt the parties. I advised the Reviewer to trust entirely to Hamlets apology that he had shot his arrow over the house and hurt his brother. The author however took the matter magnanimously & forgave an assault which he owed partly to himself although it is the great fault as I think of the Review to consider the critic as council retained to plead against the author.

Domestic news we have little or none—in about a month we propose to go to Reged and by that time I hope my hind will have provided a suitable Donky for Charlotte. Our hills are absolutely impracticable on any other terms. We reckon faithfully upon you in Summer & if you come down by the Western road I will endeavour to join you before you get into Scotland. Do not apprehend the reception of your namesake Clerk Ellis whose story I have just been reading—You may remember that when Douglas was holding his Xmas in Jedwood forest with mirth and princely cheer he was interrupted by the news that the Earl of Richmond was marching against him. Douglas hastened to meet him & a desperate engagement took place—during the fray your namesake found a short road to Linthaughlee<sup>1</sup> where Douglas feast was spread, & was actually engaged in discussing it when that Baron returned victorious from the conflict—it is

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Lintalee, an estate with a mansion in Jedburgh parish, Roxburgh shire

needless to say that the sweet meat had very sour sauce,  
& that the uninvited guests were very roughly handled—  
the coincidence of the names amused me when I lighted  
on this tale—Charlotte joins me in kindest love to Mrs  
Ellis and I am always Yours truly W S

EDINR 6 feby 1805

I hope I need not beg your candid opinion of the lay  
with that of such of your friends as you hold to be judges  
of the sort of thing

[*P erpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—

Like as the hart for water-brooks  
In thirst doth pant and bray

So have I been panting for the Romances & braying  
against<sup>2</sup> the carelessness of Longman & Constable  
On Monday evening they fortunately arrived and I  
devoured the first volume on my road to Reged next  
day I believe I feel the inconvenience of such studies ever  
since for my sides were sorely agitated at the ludicrous  
turn you have given to the dullest of the old Romances  
—to be sure I cannot wholly blame your jocularly for  
my present sore bones, for Charlotte after having displayed  
the skill of Mrs Gilpin (I mean the moiety of the facetious  
John) in packing herself a fat maid & *three chulder* into the  
chaise consigned me as a piece of outside lumber to share  
the Dickie with the driver I really hope for the sake of  
Urien, Taliessin & Aneurin either that the roads were

<sup>1</sup> Lockhart's treatment, or manipulation (to use his own word), of this and the next letter is very disconcerting This first one, about Ellis's *Specimens*, is omitted except the sentences beginning "I am interrupted by the arrival of two *gentl bachelors*," which are attached to a fragment taken from a letter of 17th October (see Vol I, pp 258 9) He then gives the letter of 17th October, ostensibly complete, but omitting the portion already cobbled up with the sentences from the July letter No indication of omission is given

<sup>2</sup> Scott writes "agains", we amend

better in their days than ours or their cars more ingeniously hung than our driving boxes But the fatigues of my painful elevation (which at one time were so great that I am not sure but I would have changed places with Mr Pitt) have been completely forgotten in the pleasure I have experienced from seeing my old friends the romances with the new face you have bestowed on them Charlotte to whom of course the narrative as well as the manner is altogether new, can scarcely persuade herself that the lively & delightful tales which she is so much charmed have sprung out of the old *Rums*<sup>1</sup> which she heard occasionally discussed at Sunninghill The transformation of a grub into a butterfly is scarcely more wonderful I venture to pledge my credit that fatigued as your fingers may be you will find yourself obliged to resume the pen & give us at least as many more volumes for believe me the world at large & your friends in particular as the advertisements have it will not otherwise be satisfied I do not think Ritsons publication which has fallen dead from the press should be any reason against your extracting the pith and marrow of Ywain & Gawain, Hornchilde, Libius Desconius & others the most interesting of his collection In fact your doing so would rather serve his publication as otherwise, since it would make it more generally known to antiquaries the only persons who can ever be supposed to purchase it for the sake of reading it Besides there remain many Romances which neither publication gives us either abstractedly or in an entire state & positively I for one will not be satisfied till you have left us nothing more to desire To shew that I have read your labours not only with pleasure but with critical attention I have to mention one or two trifling glossarial remarks, which my familiarity with the Scottish dialect enables me

<sup>1</sup> i.e. old and unsaleable books “1812 in Nichols *Lit Anec 18th C v 471* note, The books, which booksellers call rums, appear to be very numerous The French have *bouquans* for rums, and *bouquinsiste* for the seller”—*N E D*

to offer to your consideration The first however is general Vol I p 245

First he fond him cloth & cradel

I rather doubt your derivation of *cradel*<sup>1</sup> & suspect the passage contains an enumeration of the former as well as the immediate benefits conferred by Antour on Arthour—*First* (when first consigned to his care) he found him clothes & cradle—*Tho* (i e now) he found him what was necessary to the exercise of chivalry—a steed & saddle—*Pavis*, II p 15 is unquestionably a cloak used in the dance called by the same name<sup>2</sup>—we still preserve the name of the dance in Scotch (a pavié) To *play a pretty pavié* is to lead one a fine dance In Sir Eger p 339 Langsameness, is not *listlessness* but loneliness or Lonesomeness—it is still in common use Ib p 331 *throws*, is not *draws* but throws or twists in agony—we have still the *dead-throw* & you preserve the word as a substantive in *throe*, any thing twisted we call thrown & I think but am not sure that technically in English you talk of any thing made of unseasoned wood *throwing* for warping—we do at least p 328 Roman stories—does this mean any thing more than Romance? consider how corrupted an edition in 1715 must have been & how apt the printer to substitute a word he did in some degree understand for one he had never heard If I can pick more holes on my second perusal which will take place *incontinent* I will not fail to send you notice, in the mean time give me credit for the zeal & care which I must have exercised to discover such trifling slips, despite of the pleasure the perusal has given me

And so you intend a second time to balk us of your

<sup>1</sup> In a footnote Ellis had given the derivation as “*Cradel*, perhaps from *Cratula*, a species of dress which Du Cange supposes to have been clerical” —*Metr Roms*, I, p 245

<sup>2</sup> Quoting from “Guy of Warwick” the line, “The *pavis*, all of fur and gris,” Ellis adds the note “perhaps a sort of short cloak thrown over the left arm Pavois, in the French dictionaries, is interpreted a kind of buckler or large shield”—*Metr Roms*, II, p 15

northern visit (for I dare hardly hope you will venture on Reged late in the year)—if so Mahomet must e'en come to the mountain & I am not without hope of being able to do so in the ensuing spring as we have some hope my Brother in law will be then returning from India & we should be glad to greet him on his arrival I am interrupted by the arrival of two *gentil Bachelors*<sup>1</sup> whom like the Count of Artois I must despatch upon some adventure till dinner time Thank heaven that will not be difficult for tho there are neither dragons nor boars in the vicinity & men above six feet are not only scarce but pacifick in their habits, yet we have no scarcity of hawks hooded crows & corbies not to mention a curious breed of wild-cats who have eat all Charlottes chickens & against whom I have declared a war at outrance in which the assistance of these *gentes demorseaus* will be fully as valuable as that of Don Quixote to Pentapolin with the naked arm<sup>2</sup>—so if Mrs Ellis takes a fancy for Catskin fur now is the time—Remember us to her most kindly & believe me  
yours ever truly

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL BY SELKIRK 20th July 1805

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

[17th October 1805]

DEAR ELLIS,<sup>3</sup>—More than a month has glided away  
I must look forward to it as a pleasure to come I have

<sup>1</sup> On 23rd July of this year in a letter to Skene, who was then in the Highlands, Scott sends compliments to a Mr Greenough (see Vol I, p 255), who would seem to be one of the 'Bachelors' In May 1804 Clement Carlyon had written to introduce Mr Greenough, "an acquaintance of Mr Skene's & as such known to you I have no doubt already, but I want him to come to you from me" Scott will be glad to find that Greenough is "likewise a friend of Davy & Coleridge"—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> See *Don Quixote*, book III, chap IV

<sup>3</sup> For this letter as printed from Lockhart, see Vol I, pp 261 4 But he has taken great liberties with parts of it, printing part of the letter of about 5th September (that concerning the British poets and the Benedictines,



had booksellers here in the plural number <sup>1</sup> My present employment is upon an edition of John Dryden's works <sup>2</sup> which is already gone to press I was to have had the assistance of another gentleman, or rather wished to have given him mine, but the bookseller & he having disagreed, the whole labour seems likely to devolve upon me <sup>3</sup> I will be infinitely obliged to you for your advice & assistance in the course of this undertaking I fear <sup>4</sup> "Adam, Adam, why didst thou eat the apple unpared?" As the Ms <sup>5</sup> advances, the transcriber whose name is Henry Hey (Hay) unfortunately turns devout, and sets about copying legends of Saint Margaret a long dull poem about heaven & hell, being the vision[s] of one Tundale which I have seen before There is a set of curious instructions for behaviour at table, like the "stans puer ad mensam" The book belongs to a Lady <sup>6</sup> to your early consideration

As for riding on Pegasus depend upon it I will never cross him in a serious way unless I should by some strange

Vol I, p 259) and another part as of this date, 17th October We have reprinted so much as to indicate the connections between the parts separated by Lockhart, and to supply gaps

<sup>1</sup> For these sentences see Vol I, pp 258 9, where they are combined with some from a July letter

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Thomson writes to Francis Horner on 12th December "Tell my friend Elmsley, that I wish he would, for the present, spare his prophetic criticisms, on Scott's edition of Dryden The book will have its faults, but your pious indignation at conjectural emendations, or rather corruptions, need not rise very high The plays are printed chiefly from Congreve's edition, but one passage in 'The Tempest' happened to strike Ballantyne as unintelligible, and he sent it to me for my advice, as Scott was then in Selkirkshire Scott is becoming every day more and more anxious about the purity of the text, and, I trust, will give us a very valuable edition of your favourite"—G Innes, *Memoir of Thomas Thomson*, p 74

<sup>3</sup> For the Rev Edward Forster and his dismissal see notes in Vol I, pp 244 5

<sup>4</sup> For omitted sentences see Vol I, pp 262 4

<sup>5</sup> For the MS see Vol I, pp 262-64, and note, p 263 It is entitled *Metrical Romances & Moralizations*, folio 28 of which is "Translation of the Rules of Behaviour 'Stans puer ad mensam'" It also contains several hymns to the Virgin The Introduction to the 1843 edition of *The Visions of Tundale*, etc, states that in this MS "Tundale occupies folios 98 157 inclusive," and that the earliest version of *The Visions* was printed at Augsburg in 1473

<sup>6</sup> For these sentences, divorced from their context, see Vol I, p 264

accident reside so long in the Highlands and make myself master of their ancient manners so as to paint them with some degree of accuracy in a kind of *Companion* to the Minstrel Lay I hear nothing of the Edinr Review being discontinued On the contrary they have enlarged the number of each edition to 4500—Charlotte joins in all that is loving & kind to Mrs Ellis—I would fain *expect* but must be content to hope we shall see you next summer—Where dwelleth Heber the magnificent whose Liby & Cellar are superior to all others in the world ? I wish to write to him about Dryden Yours truly W SCOTT <sup>1</sup>

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>2</sup>—Your kind letter merited a much earlier acknowledgement but business of various & diversified complexion has prevented my writing Agreeable to the usage of all civilized as well as barbarous nations I will begin by treating first of my *own* plans and then of yours And first of Dryden I will *not* castrate John Dryden &c<sup>3</sup> I am very anxious to see some volumes of pamphlets libels &c referred to by Mr Malone in his life of Dryden as being in the collection of Mr Bindly the noted collector of Somerset House I once

<sup>1</sup> Lockhart's closing words, about news from Jamaica, are not in the letter as it stands, but it looks as if some part has been cut away at the foot The date at the head of the letter is not we think, Scott's He gives address and date generally at the foot of the letters

<sup>2</sup> We had conjecturally dated the portion of this letter which we printed from Lockhart's *Life* "About the end of Oct &c" See Vol I, pp 264 6 The actual date is November 29 We print here the omitted portions For 'Master Little' in Lockhart's version Scott wrote "Mr Moore" "Little" was Moore's first nom de plume *The Poetical Works of the late Thomas Little Esq* (1801) shocked the readers of the day, much as Swinburne's *Poems and Ballads* (1866) did a later generation

<sup>3</sup> For what follows to "curious annotations" see Vol I, pp 264 5, and for Ellis's letter on how the *Dryden* should be edited see same Vol, p 264, note 3 'Mr Bindly' is James Bindley (1737 1818) the book collector, a friend of, and co worker with, John Nichols of *Literary Anecdotes, etc* See *DNB*

them under a safer pilot than our friend T Thomson who has the the same veneration for a curious book as for a pretty girl I am convinced that even through their envelope their presence will communicate a sort of genial influence to their travelling companion I got down here safely & swiftly and took possession of my stool at the Clerks table before the Court rose That happy event has since taken place and when the snow will permit I propose to visit Tweed & Yarrow

Places lonely now but loving still  
The Muses—as they loved them in the days  
Of the old Minstrels & the Border Bards

A thousand compliments to the frozen Muscovite<sup>1</sup> when you write to him I like his prose Essay very much I returned Mr Bindleys books after a world of Extracts Allow me to claim your promise of lending me the volume of tracts about Dryden Millar will transmit it to me safely—perhaps however it is among the package of books already on their way to me Do you think it is possible to procure a sight of a pamphlet on the subject of Absalom [*sic*] & Achitophel called the Whip & key—I am very desirous to see it if possible

Pray remember me to Mr Nott<sup>2</sup>—I am certain he is to be a Bishop & I would fain maintain my acquaintance

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Reginald Heber who, after being elected Fellow of All Souls in November 1804, gained a prize for his English prose essay on ‘The Sense of Honour’ in 1805 About the middle of that year he set out on a two years’ tour, with his friend John Thornton, to Russia, the Crimea, Hungary, Austria, and Germany They arrived at Moscow on 3rd January 1806 and remained there till 13th March ‘The Whip & Key’ is *A Key with the Whip to open the mystery and iniquity of the poem called Absalom and Achitophel, etc* (1682) Halkett and Laing, *Dict Anony and Pseudony Eng Lit* (iii, p 217), attributes this pamphlet to Christopher Nesse (1621 1705), the divine and author ‘The author’s principal object is to show that Dryden’s Jewish names were not well chosen’—*Dryden’s Works* (Scott Saintsbury ed., 1884), ix, p 430, footnote See also *op cit*, ix, p 203

<sup>2</sup> George Frederick Nott (1767 1841), divine, and author of an edition of the *Works of Henry Howard, Earl of Surrey, and of Sir Thomas Wyatt the elder* (1815 6) He became sub-preceptor to Princess Charlotte of Wales and held various livings but did not attain to episcopal dignity

that I may know at least one Right Reverend Believe me  
ever Dear Heber Yours most truly

WALTER SCOTT

CASTLE STREET 16 March [*docketed* 1806]

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER

[*fourth week of June* 1806]

MY DEAR HEBER,—It was extremely kind of you to let me know of the health of our worthy Orientalist, I had however been relieved of anxiety on his account by a long letter from himself dated Pulo Penang 24th November last and mentioning many of the circumstances which you have been so good as to communicate. He speaks of his health as mending fast and seems delighted with India & in high spirits with his oriental acquisitions having decyphered, translated, interpreted and rendered as never Dragoman or Moonshee decyphered or translated before him. He also alludes to his having written very frequently but observes that being up the country he had no means of knowing that his letters were embarked. If they were in the stile of that which has come to my hands I dare say some kind cruel friend has opened read and detained them for his private amusement. As it never rains but it pours there have arrived from the said Orientalist a variety of letters to persons in Edinburgh all in the same tone of recovering health and spirits. I hope his relations in the country have also got letters but lest they should not I have written to Cavers-Douglas upon whose estate they live to communicate to them the joyful intelligence that the

Sweet Little Cherub sitting perch'd up aloft  
Had taen care of the life of poor Jack

I am very much pleased with this in many points of view for I had very little hopes of ever hearing of him

more The journal<sup>1</sup> must be inexpressibly curious especially if it keeps pace with one adventure of which he gives me a sketch It consists in our heroic traversing a roaring torrent not indeed on the unsteady footing of a spar but by the no less perilous medium of a brazen cauldron with three ears each of which was held by an expert swimmer who swam in a series of gyrations to the opposite bank where the contents of the pot were safely landed I was just about to have sent you my letter for perusal when yours came to hand As it contains nothing very particular concerning his views & prospects in life I was at some pains to make enquiry about them & am happy to find that he has every chance of making a handsome fortune and is now in a very desirable situation in point of emolument I shall send him a packet of books by next ships

Pray remember me a thousand times to Ellis I am a letter in his debt of which I intend soon to acquit myself Dryden goes on con spirito thanks to your kind interest w<sup>t</sup> Bindly and the use of your Editiones principes which are in safe custody I observe however no man seems to have corrected the press less attentively than Dryden

I think of a grand Highland poem to be a companion to my Border ditty Do you think this likely to answer? There is a want of truth in all the verses or rather Epics which we have in modern days They present us heroes when we would rather have a lively display of real men and manners This I cannot help think[ing] is an obvious source of interest left open to an antiquarian poet like myself, through whose brains clans have been traversing & cavalry exercising since I was three years old

<sup>1</sup> In his letter to Scott, Leyden had said he was going to prepare "a little digest from my journals for the use of you and those of my Scottish friends that recollect at this distance that there ever was such a person" He then describes how, on his way to attend a sick officer in the wildernesses of Mysore, and having to cross a river in flood, he did so in the manner Scott here retells—*MS* 939, *Nat Lib Scot* For Scott's reply to Leyden see Vol I, p 305

I take the liberty to inclose a Subscription paper for poor Hogg a phenomenon in his way I think I repeated some of his tales to you and therefore will not at present dwell on his merit but only beg you for my own sake to make as many subscribers as you can

You do not say whether Reginald is returned from frozen Muscovy nor indeed did your time admit of making me acquainted with all the news I would like to hear and of which I do no[t] acquit you The regulations proposed by Lord Grenville will in my department greatly lessen the trouble & as we understand the emoluments will be fully compensated being the true maxim of Davie Sir John Trott[er]'s servant "More wages, less work & the key of the ale cellar" On Friday<sup>1</sup> we dine in honour of Lord Melville in various parties more than a thousand strong—500 at the principal meeting of the first people in Scotland The Executive have been somewhat embarassd by an idle report that the Mid Lothian gentry are to trail a *fox* through the city & lay on the hounds

Charlotte is gone to Ashesteel with the Children for a few days but they are to remain and she is to return as I cannot do without my little house keeper Adieu Ever yours

W SCOTT

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER

DEAR HEBER,—I cannot help thinking you will have some curiosity to see the inclosed squibs which were sung with most exceeding good approbation at a meeting of Lord Melville's friends here on Friday last We were 541 in the assembly rooms tickets a guinea & a half—there were seven or eight parties in the town from 50 to 200 as

<sup>1</sup> 27th June 1806, which gives the week in which this letter was written It is wrongly docketed 1807 The Grenville ministry had been formed in February of this year See note to letter to Charlotte, 20th March 1807, p 94

they met in their several sections & coteries Music & good cheer abounded every where & the Ministerialists have not held their head[s] up since I detained my letter to you with the subscriptn paper till I should send you the inclosed<sup>1</sup> as my mind foreboded I would be tempted to rhyme on the occasion altho I did not set to work till the morning of the festival Yours ever

W SCOTT

[PM June 30, 1806]

[Cholmondeley]

TO RICHARD HEBER, HODNET HALL, BY SHREWSBURY

[Extract]

DEAR HEBER,—I had this moment inclosed Leydens letter for your perusal when yours arrived with the very interesting transcript from your brothers journal which you cannot doubt gave me the highest gratification both to my curiosity & my *amour propre* I hope he will make his journal public on his return as it is written with an uncommon degree of spirit & cannot fail to do him the highest credit The similarity of manners induced by a similarity of situation gives me great courage in a work which I am now meditating, namely a Highland Romance on the plan of the Lay, that is, not an imaginary description of manners, but as far as I can a vivid & exact description of that remarkable race as they actually existed at no very distant period Our modern Epic poets have all failed by making their personages Greeks & Trojans A fact like that mentiond by Regd which so strongly ascertains the truth of my former Border sketches<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There follow seven stanzas of verse called "The Lawyer and the Bishop to the tune of King John and the Abbot of Canterbury"

Writing to Richard on 20th April from "Phanagoria, in the Island of Taman, Reginald Heber describes the country in Georgia and particularly that part of it near the Caucasus which, he says is "inhabited by an untameable race of mountaineers, whose constant inroads and border forays keep the whole country in a state of precautions and policy similar to those of Branksholme Hall Our whole journey on the banks of the Cuban has been a comment on Walter Scott We travelled with our swords ready,

leads me to hope I shall be successful in pourtraying what is still less remote from our own times

I will be most happy to see your Oxford freinds You know your Academe always interests me for you

—have fancy fun and fire

And ne'er gude wine do fear, man

I must be here untill the 26th or 28th at farthest

Charlotte sends a thousand kind compliments Pray hand Leydens letter to Ellis who will return it with his convenience I owe him a long letter, which I begin tomorrow Yours ever

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 15 July 1806

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER

MY DEAR HEBER,—I have been truly distressd on account of our friend George Ellis whose Lady transmitted me the inclosed which I now beg leave to return with my best thanks<sup>1</sup> I hope you received my letter which I was obliged to send off in a hurry *sans frank* I am now snug at this farm & indeed have been for some time I should be happy to see your Oxonians but doubly so yourself if you could make a run from Yorkshire & spend a month here After all to a bachelor the distance is not very formidable I have been quite astonished by a paragraph in the papers respecting little Jeffrey & less Moor[e]<sup>2</sup> who seems to have base ambitions of rivalling the

our pistols primed, and enjoying all the novelty and dignity of danger almost every hill had a beacon We were almost wicked enough to wish for a skirmish"—*Life of Reginald Heber by His Widow*, 1, pp 246 47

<sup>1</sup> Scott's reply to Mrs Ellis is in the Pierpont Morgan Library

<sup>2</sup> The notorious duel in 1806 to which Byron refers in *English Bards and Scotch Reviewers*

Can none remember that eventful day,  
That ever glorious almost fatal fray,  
When Little's leadless pistol met his eye,  
And Bow-street Myrmidons stood laughing by?

—Lines 464-67



fame of his name sake of Moorhall by slaying the critical Dragon of the North Now you know how much I am interested in the said dragon and I wish you would let me know whether the Hibernian bard and he have actually had the meeting which the papers announced in such a way as to leave me at a loss whether the whole was not a quiz, & in short what was the *res gesta* I am sure Jeffrey must have behaved well and would care as little for Thomas Little as for Thomas Thumb Pray drop me a line about this matter and also particularly about Ellis's health I had a few lines from Mr Frere in which he seemed to consider all danger as over but I fear our friends sedentary habits so unfit for an invalid It is hard that we cannot have his literary exertions without risque to his health for the lamp cannot I am satisfied burn without exhausting the oil

On my own part I am very busy with Dryden & have I think got over some very difficult ground, the Absalom & the Medal My notes are very full & chiefly historical One man alone I can discover but little of & that is *Forbes* described in the 2d part of Absalom & Achitl under the name of Phaleg<sup>1</sup> I have found in Carte that he was tutor to the young Earl of Derby who married a daughter of the great Duke of Ormond & that while he was with him at Paris he was wounded & tossed in a blanket by some of Lord Derby's rakish companions Can you tell me any thing more of him? Your two volumes of first editions to which I have added some others have done me yeomans service as have the extracts from the worthy Mr Bin[dleys] volumes pray make my respectful compliments to him when you see him There are three

Here Phaleg, the lay-Hebronite, is come,  
'Cause like the rest he could not live at home "

Lines 330 31 of *Absalom and Achitophel*, Part II The footnote in *Dryden's Works* (Scott Saintsbury ed 1884), ix, pp 347 48, gives Forbes's Christian name as James, and states that Derby had married Ormond's grand daughter The account of Forbes is there taken from Thomas Carte's *Life of James, Duke of Ormonde* (1736)

pieces which I am very anxious to see if they could be bought or borrowed for Love or Money The first is "The Whip and Key" publishd by a Non con parson against Absalom & Achit which I have never been able to set eyes on The second "The Medal of John Bayes" <sup>1</sup> from which I made some extracts & have lost them It is I believe in Mr Bindlys collection—perhaps you could get some person to transcribe those passages which relate to Drydens private life—Shadwell there charges him with some crimes which are gross calumnies The third *Shadwells* translation of the X satire of Juvenal in the preface to which he mentions his controversy with Dryden & charges him with disowning Macflecnoe An extract will be quite sufficient as all I want is what relates to the controversy

Another difficulty I beg to consult you in Dryden calls his Elegy on King Charles Threnodia *Augustalis* which Johnson says is hardly classical What is your opinion of this criticism? <sup>2</sup> There is a fine string of wants and difficulties but I know you interest yourself in the success of the first complete edition of our great bard

I or rather the Booksellers for me have thrown together my fugitive ballads in an 8vo which I suppose is almost printed off a copy will wait upon you forthwith Any more news from the Georgian heroes <sup>3</sup> pray write to him to keep large notes as we shall hope to hear a great deal when he returns home

Once more if you are upon what Chaucer calls the

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Shadwell *The Medal of John Bayes A Satyr against Folly and Knavery* (1682), in which Dryden is libelled as "an abandoned rascal", "half wit, half fool" Shadwell's translation of *The Tenth Satyr of Juvenal* appeared in 1687 In the preface he says "It is hard to believe that the supposed *Author of Mack-Fleckno* is the real one, because when I taxed him with it, he denied it with all the Execrations he could think of" See *Dryden's Works* (Scott Saintsbury), 1, pp 220 29

<sup>2</sup> For this see letter to Dr Alexander Adam of the same date, and Adam's reply in note, p 388 The "fugitive ballads" are *Ballads and Lyrical Pieces* (1806) See Vol I, p 313 and note

<sup>3</sup> "Reginald travelling in Georgia"—Pencil note in MS

*Viretote*<sup>1</sup> do extend your rambles hither I assure you you never saw any thing more beautiful than our border hills in the deep imperial purple of the heather blossom Charlotte sends her best remembrances and I always am Dear Heber faithfully yours

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTEEL BY SELKIRK 18 August 1806

[*Cholmondeley*], „

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>2</sup>—I have been long silent neither through indifference for I have been thinking and talking

<sup>1</sup> “*Viretote* An unsettled state or condition c 1386 Chaucer *Miller's T* 584 (Ellesm), What eyleth yow? som gay gerl, god it woot, Hath broght yow thus up on the viretoot 1822 Scott *Nigel* xviii, Here you come on the viretot, through the whole streets of London, etc —*N E D*”

<sup>2</sup> This interesting letter, which was forwarded to Ellis ‘by Sir William Forbes Bart’ is passed over by Lockhart In it occurs the first mention of Henry Weber, at least by name Lockhart declares that the “half starved amanuensis of the letter of 21st August 1804 was Weber He must have known, but in that case it is like Scott not to mention him by name Here he gives a fuller account, but says nothing about the London booksellers In the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York, is a long article on Weber in Scott's own hand, written after Weber's death Whether it was published or not we have not found It speaks of Weber with the utmost kindness and respect “My attention was first drawn to the late Mr Henry Weber's talents and learning by a long and curious dissertation which he had the goodness to send me upon the ancient romance of Sir Tristrem which I had edited in the year 1804 Upon perusing the manuscript I was surprised to find that it related to the ancient state of poetry and romantic composition in Germany a subject which although intimately connected with the Anglo Saxon antiquities had I believe escaped all our writers upon that interesting topic Upon becoming personally acquainted with Mr Weber I was surprised to find that besides possessing the most extensive information respecting continental history and antiquities he was intimately acquainted with the ancient minstrels and dramatic compositions of Great Britain subjects which very seldom prove attractive to the learned of a different country His similarity of pursuits naturally created a considerable degree of intimacy between Mr Weber and me” He goes on to describe Weber's publications and schemes The first was an ancient poem on the battle of Flodden, formerly published by Mr Lambe, the Vicar of Norham This his ‘skill as a draughtsman enabled him to embellish with curious sketches of ancient banners and arms said to have been used in that memorable conflict—while his researches in the British Museum and elsewhere threw much important and valuable light upon points of antiquarian and genealogical curiosity” He planned a selection

about you every day nor through indolence for I have been very busy in researches upon some of your favourite

of Ancient Metrical Romances (see Vol II, p 93) and of Weber he says "Without meaning to undervalue the labours of so excellent an antiquary as Mr Ritson I may be permitted to say that Mr Weber had all his laudable research and scrupulous accuracy without those peculiarities both in opinions and in style which impeded in some measure the general reception of Mr Ritson's publication' Three volumes were issued but, the reception by the public being insufficient, the work was discontinued, and after some other tasks Weber was employed to edit Ford for Constable and Beaumont and Fletcher for Ballantyne These editions were savagely attacked by Gifford, but Scott fairly contends that both were 'far too hastily executed and double or even treble the time would have been necessary to do full justice to these admirable dramatists (B and F) This was partly from the uncertainty of Mr Weber's plans who was at that time thinking of quitting Edinburgh and was honourably desirous of fulfilling his engagements to the Booksellers Yet the work will be found infinitely superior to the previous editions It is more complete as containing a play of Fletcher's hitherto unpublished, the text is in many respects altered for the better, and the illustrations particularly those which refer to the sources were curious and satisfactory In this last particular Mr Weber was qualified better than most men for I question much if any one who survives him excepting Mr Francis Douce possesses his exclusive acquaintance not only with the novellists of Italy and Spain whose collections were the chief storehouse of our early dramatists but also with the fabliaux of the Normans, the tales of the Provençals and the still more obscure writers of early German Meister singers or Minstrels from whom these novellists borrowd the subjects which in their turn they lent to Shakespeare Ford Beaumont and Fletcher and others When Mr Weber disposed of his books at leaving Edinburgh I became proprietor of many of these collections and found their value enhanced by the curious notes which their former proprietor had inserted tracing the origin of the various narratives and affording no small light upon the early history of fictitious composition" Convinced that the dramatists were not Weber's proper field, or Edinburgh the place for research in that field, from scarcity of material, Scott describes how he turned him to another task— an original and as I still think a very important work to be entitled *Northern Antiquities* Weber was to be associated with "a learned and excellent antiquary Mr Robert Jamieson" and the purpose of the work was to introduce the reader to the romantic legends and traditions of Scandinavia and Germany "He is introduced to an entirely new cycle of chivalrous heroes as marked in their character and discriminated by manners as those of the Paladins of France or the Kingdom of the Round Table Theodoric of Verona is the central chief on whom the new order of knighthood depends as the others upon King Arthur and the Emperor Charlemagne Attila is also an actor of distinction and there can be little doubt that however disguised by an accumulation of poetical fiction as the antiquity of the real events became remote these traditions are evidently founded upon historical occurrences" After some remarks on Weber's later plans, he sums up with some remarks on his work as a poet in German and English, his skill in

studies, nor through procrastination for the inclosed or rather subjoined extracts have been long made for you but through a mixture of the two last causes with some apprehension that corresponding may not be a very proper thing for you at this present writing If so pray Mrs Ellis be so kind as take the pen and let me know how your patient does and what has been the effect of the last treatment which was threatend while I left London In the meantime dear Ellis you will be pleased to hear that the quarto volume of romances which you had from Frere is no longer a fountain hid and a book seald I have fortunately discovered an enthusiastic German romancer in the person of a Mr Weber a young man whose mother was an English woman his father a Hanoverian he himself for the sake of still farther variety being born in Russia He was studying at Jena when that university was broken up by the command of Bonaparte and has fortunately come to our college to complete his own studies and assist me in mine The first effect of the arrival of this Deus ex Machina has been a discovery which I think will interest you namely of a German Sir Tristrem Weber informs me that besides the prose Romances upon this subject of which several exist in German of various dates and which are therefore probably translations from the french prose works there is moreover a metrical Romance begun by a certain Gottfried of Strasburgh <sup>1</sup> & completed after his death by

the literature of almost all modern European nations, his tenacious and well-ordered memory, his gifts as an "accurate bibliographer," etc 'As a man of literature he pursued knowledge for her own sake with such pleasure and eagerness that he was altogether neglectful of any more interested motive and it was always necessary that a friend should take the trouble of procuring him the well earned profit otherwise I believe he might have altogether lost sight of it' The sketch is a characteristically generous tribute to the poor man of whom Lockhart speaks with such scorn as "a mere drudging German" See also *Journal*, 10th March 1826 "My patronage in this way has not been lucky to the parties protected"

<sup>1</sup> See *Tristan und Isolde nach Thomas von Erceeldoune in Gottfrieds von Strasburg Werke* (Breslau 1823), II, pp 125-239, where also is given Walter Scott's *Ergänzung des Altenglischen Gedichts, nach dem Altfranzosischen*, pp 185 88

one Von Wibert There are other metrical romances on the same subject and one in the Munich Liby which bears the following note in a different hand from that of the Ms "Of this history has written first Thomas of Britannia<sup>1</sup> and afterwards lent his Book to one named Dilhatt von Oberet who afterwards wrote it in rhymes"—Here we have our friend Thomas the Rhymer to a certainty but the puzzling part of the story is yet to come Besides Oberet who gives Thomas as his authority the aforesaid Gottfried von Strasburg makes a similar reference and his work is printed by Myller in his extensive collection of German old poetry of which the 4to vol of Frere is one sheaf or number Now Adelung (and be cursd to him) has placed this same Gottfried in 1232 What authority he has for this arrangement we must enquire but should it prove correct it is a sort of knock-down blow to all my system about the Rhymer For how could our Thomas' poem have been written & translated into french from which it would seem the German had it so early as 1232 if our hypothesis concerning the date of Tomas & his work be accurate We must certainly reconsider this matter and if possible jostle Gottfried a little lower in chronology The following is one or two of the passages in the German poem which regard Tomas<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> With this letter the true Thomas begins to emerge, who is not he of Ercildoune, but the Norman poet, author of one version of the Tristrem story, whose work has survived in fragments discovered in England, Germany, and Italy, the defects of which are made good by an abridged version of Old Norse prose, and more adequately by the German version by Gottfried of Strasburg (early thirteenth century) completed by Ulrich von Turheim and Heinrich von Freiberg "Nowhere is the story of Tristram so well preserved as in this composite German version"—See W H Schofield, *English Literature from the Norman Conquest to Chaucer* (1906), pp 201-214 Thomas "represents the highest achievement of any English poet in the twelfth century"—*Op cit*, p 203 See Lockhart's *Advertisement* to the edition of Scott's *Sir Tristrem* in the *Poetical Works of Sir Walter Scott* (1833), V, for the first effective criticism of Scott's theory by a Mr Price appended to the 8vo edition of Warton's *History of English Poetry* published in 1824

We have not printed the German lines which Scott gives alongside of his literal translations

I know well there have been many  
 Who have read of Tristand  
 And yet there have not been many  
 Who have read of him aright

After many professions that he will be more accurate than  
 his predecessors in telling this famous tale Gottfried proceeds

But as I have said  
 That they have not read aright  
 That has happend as I tell you  
 They spoke not in the right  
 As Thomas of Britany gives it  
 Who was Master of Adventure  
 And who read in British books  
 The lives of all lords of the land  
 And who has given us information about them

Afterwards he tells us that he sought after the true  
 story in all Books both French & Latin "welschen and  
 latinen" that he might tell the story in Thomas's truth  
*Welschen* according to Weber is used indiscriminately for  
 French and Latin, perhaps the latter is here meant for  
 the continuator of Gottfried's romance mentioned

As Thomas of Britannia spoke  
 Of the sweet youthful pair  
 In Lombardic tongue  
 Thus have I the truth  
 In German of the pair said

Upon the whole I think we will get some light on the  
 history of Romance from the German authorities They  
 seem to possess an indigenous race of heroes as famous  
 among themselves as Arthur & his chivalry in England  
 and Charlemagne among the French

I send this by favour of my friend Sir William Forbes  
 the son of the amiable Biographer of Beattie & the worthy  
 representative of one of the worthiest men in Scotland  
 His Brother George Forbes is going to spend a year or  
 two at Petersburg & Sir William is anxious to procure  
 him such recommendations as may be creditable He is  
 a very amiable gentlemanlike young man & has very

good manners & if you can favour him with an introduction to any friend at the Russian capital I am sure he will do credit to it Should you have any *liaison* remaining which may render this quite easy, Sir Williams address in case he does not send it will be Moffat & Kensington, Bankers, London I hope you will find yourself stout enough to write me a few lines telling me particularly how your health is Charlotte joins in anxiety upon this interesting subject & also in kindest and best Compliments to Mrs Ellis We are going to the country in the middle of this month meanwhile we are boiling roasting & frying in the burning streets of this our Northern Metropolis Yours ever affectionately

EDINBURGH 1st July [1807]

WALTER SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO RICHARD HEBER, BRAZ[E]NOSE COLLEGE, OXFORD

MY DEAR HEBER,—I received your letter yesterday and today I will look out for your two friends to whom I have every motive to shew all the little kindness in my power In the first & most emphatic place they are *your* friends 2dly they are Oxonians<sup>1</sup> & I entertain a warm partiality

<sup>1</sup> On 13th November Heber commends to Scott's notice "two very amiable & excellent fellows at present resident in yr capital" They are the Rev T Smyth and his pupil Lord Desart (see note, p 298), "a young Irishman of considerable talents & promise" They are attending Dugald Stewart's and other lectures, and are anxious to be personally acquainted with Scott, of whom they have heard so much "They both possess considerable poetical talents" Heber would like them to be shown the same 'familiar & domestic intercourse' which he himself had enjoyed while in Edinburgh & for that Smyth will be more grateful, & his pupil also, than for state dinners at the Lord Provosts or Lord *any* bodys My friends are both Oxford men Smyth (who by the way is brother to the author of English Lyrics spoken well of in the Edinb Rev) is fellow of Oriel Coll where you *dined* with me, I remember Desart was of Ch Church & formerly of Eton There is a very respectable set of young English students just gone to Edinburgh —*Walpole Collection* "The English Lyricist" is William Smyth, the Cambridge Professor, for whom see Vol II, p 63 and note 1, Vol IV, p 453 and note 1 His *English Lyrics* were published in 1797 The date of William Stansby's edition of *Morte Arthure* is 1634, not 1636



for all pleasant men from that university I am sure I owe them much for some of the pleasantest days I ever past in my life 3dly I have a regard for the English Lyricist & would be happy to shew attention to his brother If you find these reasons arranged with a little formality excuse it in consideration of my being at present seated upon my own proper stool at the Clerks table which naturally leads my pen to slide into "whereas s" & "in respect of s" & "first second thirds" & so forth

Now though a little alien from the genius loci I must implore your advice upon the subject of republishing the old romance of the *Morte Arthur*<sup>1</sup> I have determind upon this (I mean anonymously & without notes) in order to preserve a curious specimen of old English Romance I don't want to make it an antiquarys book & shall therefore print from Stansby's edition in 1636 I think, because the language is perfectly intelligible But before printing I should like to have your opinion or rather your instruction concerning the earlier editions and what extent of collation will be necessary All that I can find in Scotland are copies in the 17th Century Caxton's copy I believe is not now known to exist but I

<sup>1</sup> A letter lent me quite recently by Mrs H B Gilroy, Fingask, Errol, Perthshire, addressed to Millar, and dated 11th October 1807, moots this scheme He has put into Ballantynes hands with copy for Dryden "copy for a book which I intend to reprint and which you may publish if you please It is the famous black Letter Romance calld the *Morte Arthur* which contains much good old English and some very spirited adventures I intend to make a page or two of preface perhaps a sheet or two of preface and put my initials to it I have referd to this curious work so frequently in *Marmion* that I am sure if that poem sell a small edition of the romance (say 500 or 700 at most) will go off and perhaps lead the way to reprint others in the same stile If you do not like to be concernd in this *keep my secret* With regard to terms (if inclind to take printing &c off my hands) I fancy you will think 30 gu a volume copy money not extravagant I think it will be two volumes In fact it will cost me very little trouble and I am only availing myself of my popularity when I make any charge at all But I want to pick up a few books at the Roxburgh sale and I must make one black letter pay for others if I can" In a P S he adds "I have got nearly a complete collection of 1st editions of Dryden, which will help to improve a second edition should we see that happy day" In regard to *Morte Arthur* Scott gave way to Southey See p 298 with note 2

am most desirous to know what is the earliest I presume the refaciamento in Edward VIth's time I should not be unwilling to replace the oaths profanity & so forth which that Editor piques himself on having exploded from Sir Thomas Mallore's copy Of course the Bookseller makes a very limited edition in a small old fashioned 4to—Should this succeed at all or even save itself I think of going through our old Bibliotheque Bleue—Do write me on this subject with unwash'd hands as Falstaff says—Palmerin you have seen of course it is I think far inferior to Amadis & infinitely so to the Morte Arthur in which I take great pleasure I expect more amusement from the Cid than from any of the Spanish Romances which have an uncommonly buckram character They throw however a light upon Don Quixote<sup>1</sup> which though somewhat conversant with French & English romance was quite new to me You say nothing of Ellis I wrote him a long letter by favour of Sir William Forbes now two months past & he is such a regular correspondent that I am uneasy at not hearing of him

I am advancing with horse & foot i.e. prose & verse as fast as I can Marmion was sorely interrupted in summer by some very unpleasant & worrying business<sup>2</sup> but he is now progressive Dryden is also coming forth—there must necessarily be a good many faults & blunders but I hope there will also be something valuable I think both works will be out in January if I can keep the printers to their duty

Charlotte begs kind remembrances I hope Reginald & Thomas are both well Believe me Dear Heber Ever Yours most kindly

W SCOTT

*November 18th [PM 1807]*

Depend on my attending to the Catalogue I have Leyden's Ms belonging to you & also your valuable

<sup>1</sup> See Vol I, p 390

<sup>2</sup> See Vol I, p 367, Vol VII, p 396

Luttrell folios<sup>1</sup>—The former I will send by the cataloguer but the others are too bulky—How shall I forward them

[*Cholmondeley*]

6  
TO RICHARD HEBER, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

MY DEAR HEBER,—Thou art even as the deaf Adder which will not hear the voice of the charmer, charm he never so wisely You did not inform me Southey was about *Morte Arthur* a task which I willingly resign to him as I am sure he will do justice to that very curious work<sup>2</sup> I am too indignant to waste words in expostulation but barely refer to the Introduction to the sixth Canto of *Marmion* where you will find I have poured forth the vial of my wrath against you That the shot may go *home* I have desired the Cartridge may be of the larger paper — In other words you will be pleased to receive a large paper Copy of this said Romantic poem which I hope sincerely you will like as well as the Lay —It is one thing to be indifferent about gaining literary reputation & another to lose any rank which one has already gained

I have to thank you for some very pleasant hours spent with Mr Smythe & Lord Desart<sup>3</sup> & the minor Oxonians whom we have among us I hope to be very soon in London with all your books & fraught with new literary

<sup>1</sup> Heber and Bindley came into the possession of some of the treasures from the collection, particularly rich in Dryden, of Narcissus Luttrell (1657-1732), the book collector and bibliographer See our Vol I, p 250 and note

<sup>2</sup> See Vol I, p 101 But Southey himself had announced to Scott the project of his edition of *Morte d Arthur* on 8th December 1807 "I am sorry to have forestalled you, and you are the only person whom I should be sorry to forestall in this case, because you are the only person who could do it certainly as well, and perhaps better, with less labour than myself" He again writes on 11th February 1808, saying that it is more than two months since he got news that Heber would look out for him all his Round Table books—*Life and Correspondence of Robert Southey Edited by His Son* (1850), III, pp 125, 131

<sup>3</sup> John Otway, second Earl of Desart (1788 1820) See V Gibbs, *The Complete Peerage*, IV (1916), p 228

projects for your consideration & co-operation Dryden  
will soon be out Believe me Yours truly

EDINR 20th *february* 1808

WALTER SCOTT

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER, FAVOURD BY MR BALLANTYNE

DEAR HEBER,—I am just favourd with your kind and flattering critique on *Marmion*<sup>1</sup> I hope you will be equally favourable to old John Dryden of whom Millar has my directions to send you a set so soon as it reaches London which will be in a few days Look upon it with some commiseration as a great work undertaken under considerable disadvantages—that of distance from you none of the least I have directed a set to be transmitted to the friendly collector Mr Bindly & another to Malone because although he was costive enough I have been so much obliged to his labours that I certainly owe him a tribute of respect Perhaps also he owes me something if I have succeeded in my attempt to make his lucubrations useful to the public at large

As you allude to the dirty scandal of the Morning Chronicle & are fond even of minute literary anecdote I have only to say about the line in question that it was

<sup>1</sup> On 2nd April Heber says that, from the specimen of *Marmion* he had seen last spring, he knew it would contain much real poetry, but he knew nothing of the plan of it When they had talked about it, Scott at that time seemed inclined 'to sink the story, without which the finest descriptive verse, whether of scenery or manners, is apt to flag' Though most of the London public prefer *Marmion* to *The Lay*, Heber "cannot get the better of *first love*" With regard to the introductory addresses to the Cantos, "they are all highly poetical and interesting, but they do not possess the appropriate charm of being links in the story like those of 'the lay' You will hardly believe me when I tell you the verses on Pitt & Fox are the least popular in London of the whole poem? So impossible is it to satisfy or conciliate party spirit I suppose you have seen the attack in the Morning Chronicle on the supposed omission of 2 lines in certain copies If I am right those 2 lines were an after *insertion*, not first inserted, & then omitted"—*Walpole Collection* What Scott here says about the inserted lines having been supplied by a friend of Pitt corroborates the statement he makes in his letter to Lady Abercorn on 3rd April 1808, Vol II, p 35, that Lord Abercorn had written, or at least suggested, them

none of my writing but suggested by a particular friend of Mr Pitt I was then in London & had sent the proof sheet to Edinr the very day that this happend I wrote desiring the line to be inserted & the sheet being thrown off I directed a cancel to be made of a leaf for its admission & thought no more of the matter but that it filld up a sort of *hiatus* which did not please me as the passage originally stood The work being sent off to London in a great hurry indeed a most uncommon one, I suppose the person who gatherd the sheets (as they call it) may have omitted in a few instances to tear up the leaf where the cancel should be inserted & this is the mighty matter for which such a blackguard reason is assignd Ballantyne & Constable to whom I gave the list of friends whom I wishd to have copies have written to the publisher to contradict the report that any distinction was directed by me or intended by them between such copies & those given to the public The fact is I wishd to say all my conscience would permit me about Fox so soon as his friends had kickd themselves down stairs which made me enhance his character as far as I could beyond the first sketch If I have displeased both parties in the matter I have some chance of being quite right for once in my life

As for your query about Eleu loro &c it is the chorus of a Gaelic song to which Constances words are in some measure adapted I send this by favour of the typographical worthy Ballantyne—if you ask him he will sing you the song The cloud that hangs on the palmers sally in Canto III may be removed if you conceive him to be in the same hay loft with Eustace but unknown to the latter He heard the conference saw Marmion sally out & Eustace follow him into the street where he waited his return—What was to hinder him to go out by the postern leave the village by the back way & riding as fast as Marmion rode slow reach the camp about the same time though by a detour I am not surprized the knight-  
ing in the Chapel does not please you for it does not please

me & I struck it out twice as *manque* but on consideration let it stand

Constable has tempted me to engage in a superlative edition of Swift moyennant £1500,, which my time being my own is a temptation not easily resisted, Think if you can assist me in this matter I hope to be in town soon and consult you in person

Will you take upon you the task of making my best respects acceptable to Mr Malone with the set of Dryden<sup>1</sup>— I don't care to write to him as I think He always treated me rather drily I will write to Father Bindley I hope to be in London soon and am ever Yours truly

EDINR 5 April [1808]

WALTER SCOTT

Your volumes are safe but too weighty to send with Ballantyne I will bring them up myself

[Cholmondeley]

TO RICHARD HEBER

MY DEAR HEBER,—This short line will serve to introduce to you Mr Henry Weber one of the most active antiquaries (though very young) that perhaps you have ever met with We [are] agitating despite of Ritsons failure a grand collection of Metrical Romances for which he is making researches in every direction Being a German by birth he is Master of the Teutonic metrical lore which few of us know anything about He will explain his views in turn himself which I believe chiefly regard the Museum If you can assist him in his plans or shew him some little attention I think you will be repaid by the service you will probably do to ancient lore but if not place the balance to accot of Dear Heber yours truly

EDINR 12 May [1808]

WALTER SCOTT

[Cholmondeley]

<sup>1</sup> The first collected edition of *Dryden's Prose Works* (1800) was edited by Edmund Malone (1741 1812), the great Shakespeare editor and the support and guide of Boswell when compiling his *Johnson*

TO RICHARD HEBER, MARTON HALL, SKIPTON ON CRAVEN,  
YORKSHIRE

DEAR HEBER,—Your Craven Kite is not a Damascus pigeon—his fight is cruelly oblique I only received yours of the second this morning & write in haste to say that nothing will give us more pleasure than your carrying your good intentions toward us into execution We lie directly on the great Western road to Edinburgh by Carlisle Longtown Langholm & Selkirk The Mail will drop you at Selkirk about eleven or twelve o'clock where you must take a bed for the night —We are just seven miles off & if we knew the precise time of your arrival would send the carriage for you in the morning You will find us all well and hearty except poor old *Camp* who is *admodum mutatus* —I shall insist on your prolonging your stay being as idle as you can desire saving the chivalrous employments of old Thrym the King of the Thurn

Twisting of collars my dogs to hold  
And combing the manes of my coursers bold <sup>1</sup>

Once more let nothing divert you from your good intentions I expect the Morritts here today or tomorrow How fortunate if you could come in upon us Charlotte begs kindest compliments & I am dear Heber Ever yours truly

W SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 8th Sept<sup>r</sup> [1808]

Your letter going by *Kelso* made the delay—my address is by *Selkirk* You must fight your way from Rippon to Carlisle by Penrith But if you go to Boroughbri[d]ge you are in the very centre of all the mail coach tracts & can find no difficulty in getting on to Carlisle & thence to

<sup>1</sup> Compare his letter to Joanna Baillie of 18th September this year "Why I am very like a certain King of the Thurn distinguished in the Edda who when Lok paid him a visit—Was twisting of collars &c'—Vol II, p 92 The reference is to the Edda poem *Thrymskvida*, lines 18 20 See Vigfusson and Powell, *Corpus Poeticum Boreale* (1883), I, p 176

Selkirk I can say little about the route on horseback  
never having rode farther than the lakes

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,—Your letter reachd me this morning & contrary to my wont I am about to return you an answer as mercantile folks say in course My London journey continues uncertain as to time duration & every thing else It depends in truth upon the Chancellors coming to a resolution about the names to be ingrossd in the Commission to be issued under the Scotch bill & what depends upon his Lordships doubts & hesitations is not likely to be soon decided This is an egregious blemish in the character of a most excellent Judge If we come to town before your leaving Claremont we will be happy to come down to see Mr Charles Ellis I am truly sorry for the accident which has confined him as I already love him for your sake & am sure that I only need to know him to love him for his own We had equally to our joy & surprize a flying visit of Heber about three weeks ago—he staid but three days but between old stories & new we made them very merry in their passage We had much talk of you and often wish'd for your presence & Mrs Ellis's to have made our party complete During Hebers stay<sup>1</sup> I doubt there is among them too much *self-seeking* as it was calld in Cromwells time, & what is their misfortune if not their fault there is not among them one in the decided situation of paramount authority both with respect to the others & to the Crown which is I think necessary at least in difficult times to produce promptitude regularity & efficiency in measures of importance But their political principles are sound English principles<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> For what follows to "Canning (excepted)" see Vol II, p 120 The passage discusses the commencement of *The Quarterly Review*

<sup>2</sup> For what follows to "Lord Melville" see Vol II, pp 120 23



With the exceptions I have mentioned the thing continues a secret & I hope will remain so till the first bomb bursts upon the public which Murray designs shall be without any other annunciation than the dispersing a certain number of gratis copies The time of publication should I think be quarterly

It was I that persuaded Constable to re-edit Carlton's Memoirs & as an inducement such as it was wrote the little prefatory memoir which I am very vain to find you distinguish The book has been long a favourite of mine As to Thomson it is more for country's sake & because I happen to have a large bundle of his letters than for any other reason that I thought of giving a Memoir & critique to the new Edition of his works I heartily wish myself out of the scrape <sup>1</sup>

I am truly happy you think well of the Spanish business They have begun their business in a truly manly & sound minded manner & barring internal dissention are I think very like to make their part good Bonaparte's army has come to assume such a very motley description as gives good hope of its crumbling down on the frost of adversity setting in The Germans & Italians have deserted him in troops & I greatly doubt his being able to assemble a very huge force at the foot of the Pyrenees unless he trusts

<sup>1</sup> On 26th October Ellis writes "I rather regret your intention of becoming the biographer of Thompson I am not myself extravagantly fond of the *Seasons*, being no lover of blank verse, and not being much disposed to believe, from my own experience, that we have four seasons in this climate Yet as Thompson is a great master of landscape painting, I have no doubt of being very much amused by your critical remarks

Pray who edited Capt Carleton? there is about a page of the introduction prefixed by the editor of these memoirs which is written quite after my own heart'—*Walpole Collection*. An edition of Thomson's *The Seasons*, prefaced by a life, came out this year See Scott's letter to William Miller, 30th October 1808, Vol II, p 113—"Thomson will be a load off my mind and my hands "Capt Carleton' is Scott's edition (1808) of Captain George Carleton's *Military Memoirs from 1672 to 1713 etc* (1728), "to which he [Scott] gave a lively preface and various notes" (*Lockhart*, chap xvii) See *Archibald Constable and His Lity Corresponds*, III, p 9 The work, considered to be one of Defoe's fabrications, "belongs to the same class of writing as the 'Memoirs of a Cavalier'"—W Wilson, *Life and Times of Daniel De Foe* (1830), III, p 589

that the terror of his name will be sufficient to keep Germany in subjugation & Austria in awe The finances of your old Russian friends are said to be ruind out & out , such is the accounts we have from Leith Enough of this tattle which as it exceeds a single letter I will enclose to Mr Charles Ellis that you may not be tempted to weigh the value of the correspondence with the expence of postage Charlotte joins in a thousand kind compliments to Mrs Ellis & I am always affectionately yours

ASHESTIEL 2d Novr 1808

WALTER SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—Since our letters travel slowly the best remedy will be to write regularly as I am particularly anxious you should be possessd with all that I can communicate upon the subject of the Review Mr Giffords letter after acquiescing in my opinion that there should be an article on the Spanish business (God grant it may be an exulting one) suggests Southey as the writer This I disapprove of entirely Southey is my freind, an excellent man & will be a valuable contributor but will assuredly go off the course if employd in politics—then if once wrong Gifford will find him absolutely intractable—if his articles are corrected & grafted upon he is likely to fly off altogether—In literature he will be an admirable assistant but the political department should be kept sacred to those on whose principles we can place the most implicit dependence I have ventured to suggest *you* as the fittest person to display this most important *banner* for such it may be considered You have seen Romana,<sup>2</sup> are in

<sup>1</sup> A large part of this long letter is printed from *Lockhart* in Vol II, pp 127-30 Of the rest much deals with dry details about the coming *Quarterly* We have printed *three* paragraphs touching on Southey, Gifford, Tom Scott, Jeffrey and the *Edinburgh*

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Pedro Caro y Sureda, Marquis de la Romana (1761 1811), the Spanish general, who was unjustly disparaged in James Moore's *Narrative of*

Cannings confidence & above all have the admirable tact necessary to treat a subject of such extreme delicacy where we might peril our credit by insisting too much on our hopes & paralyze our cause by giving too much cause for apprehension. You will have enough of time to execute the task for in order that we may have the most recent intelligence & that events may not contradict our observations—even between the publishing & printing the article should be one of the last in the No. Do my dear Ellis give your mind to this intently & let Gifford know that you are about it, which will stop all further proceedings towards Southey—There is another circumstance which Mr. Gifford mentions & which I do not like though on so short an acquaintance I can hardly bear to tell him so. I mean his idea of making Hoddesons Juvenal<sup>1</sup> an article & doing the same by a late translation of Persius. Mr. G. is himself the translator of Juvenal he is about to publish an English Persius, he is also the Editor of the Review—surely in our first number at least we should admit no hook on which malignity could hang an inference. We should be *omni suspitione majores* as the civilians say. Will you who know Mr. G's temper devise some mode direct or indirect of insinuating to him that his purpose may be grossly misrepresented. I am the more full on these particulars. This is worthy of a Memento

To return to the first No. —It will naturally rest upon the exertions of a very few persons & they must work hard. I do not deprecate personal labour but my line (as you well know) is *borne*. I think my brother Tom could write

*the Campaign etc in Spain, commanded by Sir John Moore, etc*, reviewed in *The Quarterly Review*, vol. 11, No. 111, August 1809, of which see p. 231.

<sup>1</sup> By "Hoddesons Juvenal" Scott seems to mean the translation by Francis Hodgson (1781-1852), provost of Eton, which appeared in 1807. He is probably confusing Hodgson with John Hoddesdon, Dryden's friend. No article on a Juvenal translation appeared in the early numbers of *The Quarterly*, but one on a translation of Persius occurs in No. 11, May 1809, p. 355. Gifford's *Juvenal* had come out in 1802, a second edition, along with Persius, did not appear till 1817.

articles of light humour as well as most people<sup>1</sup>—at least he has an astonishing fund of it in conversation & is in his way a great reader I will apply to him Richd Heber will I fear do nothing but I hope wealth and wedlock have not lulld Reginald dead asleep in the lap of that Ease which Churchill says “all priests love”<sup>2</sup>—W Rose is true as steel I have written to him on the subject—I have an excellent scientific man aye more than one who will jump at the præmium of 10 Gns a sheet — In procuring articles of foreign literature those of interest should doubtless be selected in which I agree with you that the Edinr Review is not always successful But it would be a great feather in our cap to have early transmission of remarkable works & this could be much furtherd by ministerial influence

Jeffery is I think not unlikely to resign the management of the Review here He told me he did not feel himself at liberty to alter Broughams articles although he thought those on Spain greatly too strong & that altogether he cared very little about the publication

Ever yours

W SCOTT

EDINR 18th November [1808]

When I was finishing this long letter the cover with Giffords has eloped to the post & will I find reach you a day sooner probably to your surprize

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

<sup>1</sup> For Scott's letter to Tom, 19th November 1808, suggesting he might contribute to *The Quarterly Review*, see Vol II, p 130, and for other two, Jan'y Feb and 24th February 1809, urging Tom to send his contributions, see Vol VII, pp 425, 427 respectively

<sup>2</sup> “through love of ease,  
Which all priests love”

—Charles Churchill, “Fragments of a Dedication to Dr W Warburton,”  
lines 11 12

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—I hasten to answer your two kind letters I think decidedly that the Danish as well as the Spanish pamphlet should appear in the first No It is of so much consequence to pre-occupy the ground in the Copenhagen question as I doubt not that the Edinr will have [an article] in their next that even were the inconvenience greater than I apprehend it would be a case of necessity This is gloomy news from Spain I hope in God they have not neglected their levies during the precious month which preceded the onset I agree with you that the tone of the political articles should be extremely temperate And now let me report progress The Cid and the Burns will soon be in Giffords hands although my time has been greatly occupied by the sitting of the parliamentary commission William Erskine has promised to do Currans speeches (a rich subject) and a new poem by Hector McNeil<sup>2</sup> which said poem is a most wretchedly tame composition I hope to get a trifling article or two from my brother before the beginning of January but our communication with the Isle of Man is slow & interrupted & I fear my brother will hardly venture to forward his articles to Gifford till I have lookd them over Indeed he has no habits either of study or composition though extremely good natural parts & particularly an unusual keen perception of the Ludicrous Young Douglas of Orchardtown has promised a historical article & Josiah Walker who writes rather well is engaged on Bruces Life He knew the Abyssinian personally & may if he handles his topic rightly make a handsome article<sup>3</sup>

To change this despairing theme I have the pleasure to say that a gentleman recently arrived from India has

<sup>1</sup> Of this letter the larger part is printed from *Lockhart* in Vol II, pp 134-6 Of what remains we print the first and last paragraphs

<sup>2</sup> *The Pastoral and Lyric Muse of Scotland* (1808)

<sup>3</sup> For what follows to "Lord Soulis's cauldron!" see Vol II, pp 134-36

brought us most pleasing news of John Leyden with two characteristick remembrances for me A book on the Indo-Chinese tribes their language & probable descent & a Malay cris beautifully mounted & embued I am assured in poison as fatal as that of the Upas No letter however, but very pleasant accounts both<sup>1</sup> of the wild sage's fortune & reputation Besides his appointment in the Academy at Calcutta he is also a Judge of police with an appointment of 1500 rupees a month of which my informant says he need not spend a penny his other appointments being sufficient to maintain his (very moderate) mode of living And in point of learning he is already believed to have far outstripd Sir William Jones<sup>1</sup> & this I have heard from more than one good authority—Adieu my dear Ellis God bless you I have been three days or more in writing this by snatches Your ever

W SCOTT

EDINBURGH 13 Decr 1808

Observe I am at Edinburgh not Ashestiel

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>2</sup>— I draw great comfort from the dogged & determined tone of the Spaniards—if they will but be true to themselves it is scarcely possible that they can be finally subjugated—but all will depend upon their resisting the panic which the French arms carry before them I would to God that the Sicilian army were in Catalonia & Moore 50,000 strong when I have a great fancy that the tide might be turnd against Bonaparte

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Sir William Jones (1746-94), the oriental scholar, whose Persian as spoken some natives could not understand and had to appeal to Leyden

<sup>2</sup> For Lockhart's extracts from this letter see Vol II, pp 137-8 We add two short paragraphs Here Scott's words about Jeffrey are a little stronger than Lockhart's "engaging" (in our Vol II, p 138 l 5) This letter shows that Jeffrey's statement had been made in a letter, not orally

I have a droll letter from my brother on the subject of the Review & cannot help sending you the first leaf, as you express a wish to know what sort of a genius he is I have made some progress with Burns but cannot do much till the Courts rise as I have my official duty as well as that of the parliamentary Commission to attend to

Jeffery has offered terms<sup>1</sup> On farther thoughts I enclose his note which pray return Ever Dear Ellis yours truly

W SCOTT

CASTLE STREET Monday [15th Decembr 1808]

[Pierpont Morgan]

TO RICHARD HEBER

MY DEAR HEBER,—The inclosed note concerning your order will shew that I have been faithful in attending to your interest through the medium of the younger Ballantyne who was there acting for himself & for me The Books went to a most atrocious price as this report shews too plainly I fear there has been a mistake in the catalogue concerning the date of the Squire Meldrum<sup>2</sup> but I send you the book by favour of an official frank that you may consider whether you will keep it or no The Book-sellers think it a pennyworth But books of all kinds are risen to the most extravagant pitch as I find to my cost I took care to make suitable arrangements with Thompson to prevent collision

I was greatly delighted with Europe<sup>3</sup> even more than I was at first hearing it among the heather on Ashestiel Hope Pray give my best compliments to Reginald & tell him how much we are charmd both with the spirit & expression of the poem

You are correct about the Revw yet it has not faild in

<sup>1</sup> For what follows see Vol II, p 138

<sup>2</sup> Sir David Lyndsay's *The Historie of ane Nobil and Walzeand Squyer, William Meldrum* (1648 50)

<sup>3</sup> *Europe, o L n s on the Present War* (1809)—the war in Spain

its object the sale has been uncommonly rapid and in the composition I am confident we shall go on from strength to strength Mr Gifford is tant qu'il soit peu indolent but John Murray is the most alert of biblioplists & keeps us all to our mettle The thing will do, of that I was positive or it should never have had my concurrence for I reckon I have a sort of second sight in these matters which has hitherto kept me from embarking in any vessell destined for shipwreck

I am grieve[d] to tell you that we have lost our old friend Camp<sup>1</sup> Last week after a short illness he concluded his life "spent in my service dying at my feet" I was rather more grieved than philosophy admits of & he has made a sort of blank which nothing will fill up for a long while As you are fond of latin poetry I copy on the other side a few lines of Lord Woodhouselee in honour of the defunct<sup>2</sup> They were literally written extempore & are pretty as to sense, of latin & prosody I am no judge  
Yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 10 March [1809]

[Cholmondeley]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>3</sup>—Referring to a former letter which I wrote to you in Southey's behalf I beg leave to add that the matter of the Stewardship of the Derwentwater estates bears now a very feasible face<sup>4</sup> I had suggested to Southey to make his way to Lord Lonsdale who is *valde*

<sup>1</sup> Scott's dog, Camp, died in 1809, which gives the year date for this letter Lockhart says, chap. xix "He died about January 1809," but, to confirm the above date, see our Vol II, p. 172

<sup>2</sup> On this Mr Tait remarks "If they are like Lord Woodhouselee's lines of the epitaph for himself in Greyfriars Churchyard, Edinburgh, their prosody and Latinity must be curious"

<sup>3</sup> This letter also was passed over by Lockhart Most of it deals again with Southey and we have printed only a few lines

<sup>4</sup> See Vol II, pp. 202, 3 and note, 212, 13 and note



pittite & Canningite & must have much to say in a thing lying at his door & I have a letter from Southey this morning with the following passage "Lord Lonsdales countenance is secured, he has replied both to Sir George Beaumont & Senhouse in the handsomest manner & the former by his advice has written to Lord Mulgrave in whose gift the appointment will rest "

When I think of the damned armistice my whole head is sore and my whole heart sick The cowardice of the miserable Emperor has again ruined the hopes of Europe It is well our expedition was not in the North sea to return with finger in the mouth

Mrs Scott joins in kindest Compliments to Mrs E Adieu dear Ellis I remain ever Your truly faithful

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL BY SELKIRK 7th August [1809]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—I have your letter marked with all your friendly & zealous animation in favour of merit I therefore do not write to whet a purpose that is not blunted, but to express my anxious wishes that your kind endeavours in favour of Southey may succeed, while it is called *today*, for, by all tokens, it will be soon *yesterday* with this ministry And they well deserve it, for crossing, jostling, & hampering the measures of the only man<sup>2</sup> among them fit to be entrusted with the salvation of the country If Southey's pension could be augmented under the paction of its being resigned when he should obtain the place of historiographer for which he is so eminently qualified, it would put him at once beyond the reach of the spring-tide which may for ought I know break in this next session of parliament

<sup>1</sup> This letter is printed here for the first time

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Canning

There is an evil fate upon us in all we do at home & abroad else why should the Conqueror of Talavera be retreating from the field of his glory at a moment when by all reasonable calculation he should have been the soul & mover of a combined army of 150,000 English Spaniards & Portugueze, & why should Gifford employ himself at home in the thrifless exercise of correction, as if Mercury instead of stretching to a race himself were to amuse himself with starting a bedrid cripple & making a pair of crutches for him with his own hands Much might have been done & may yet be done but we are not yet in the right way <sup>1</sup> Is there no one among you who can throw a Congreves rocket among the gerunds & supines of that model of pedants Dr Philopatris Par <sup>2</sup> I understand your foreign lingos too little to attempt it but pretty things might be said upon the memorable *tureen* which he begd of Lord Somebody whom he afterwards wishd to prove to be mad For example I would adopt some of [the] leading phrases of *independent, high-sould, contentus parvo* & so forth with which he is beplaisterd in the Edinr & declare it our opinion that if indulgd with the three wishes of Prior's tale he would answer like the heroine Corsica

A ladle to my silver dish  
Is all I want is all I wish <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ellis writes on 8th October "With regard to our review if we could contrive to be a little less wise and learned we should do a great deal better—and so, pray think of some means of enlivening us next time I have preached the same preachment to Gifford and he has promised me that he will do something" —*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Dr Samuel Parr (1747-1825), whose *Characters of the late Charles James Fox, etc*, under the pseudonym of "Philopatris Varvicensis," came out in 1809 This was Parr's last work The critique in *The Edinburgh Review*, No xxviii, July 1809, remarks "The writer, a clergyman, speaks of himself as a very independent man, who has always expressed his opinions without any fear of consequences, or any hope of bettering his condition We sincerely believe he speaks the truth, etc —p 356 A later review appeared in *The Quarterly*, No iv, November 1809, pp 375 401

"A ladle for our silver dish  
Is what I want, is what I wish"

MATTHEW PRIOR, *The Ladle*, lines 135-36

I did not review Miss Edgeworth<sup>1</sup> nor do I think it at all well done—at least it falls below my opinion of that lady's merits. Indeed I have contributed nothing to the last Review & therefore according to all rules am the more entitled to criticize it freely. The conclusion of the article of Sir J. Moore is transcendentally written & I think I can venture to say "Aut Erasmus aut Diabolus." Your sugar cake is very far from being a heavy bon-bon, but conveys a quantity of curious & interesting matter which you only could have made so to the British public. But there I think we stop. The article on Insanity wants system & that on the Missionaries though very good is upon a subject rather stale, and much of the rest is absolute wad[d]ing.

As an excuse for my own indolence I must tell you I've been in the Highlands at least on the verge of them for some time past. And who should I meet there of all fowls in the air but your friend Mr Blackburn to whom I was so much obliged for the charge he took of my late unfortunate relative at your friendly request. The recognition was unfortunately made just when I was leaving the country & as he was in a gig & I on the driving seat [of] a carriage, the place of meeting [a] narrow Highland road which looked as if forty patent ploughs had furrowed it we had not time or space for so long a greeting as I would have wished. He has got a capital good house (in lease) on the banks of the Leven about three miles below its discharge from the Lake & very near the classical spot where Matthew Bramble and his whole family were conducted by Smollett & where Smollett himself was born.<sup>2</sup> There is a new inducement to

<sup>1</sup> Her *Tales of Fashionable Life*. See *The Quarterly Review*, vol. 11, No. 11, August 1809, pp. 146-54.

Strictly speaking, Tobias Smollett was born in 1721 at Dalquhurn, lying contiguous to Bonhill, Dumbartonshire. For Matthew Bramble's visit to the Vale of Leven and "the copy of a little ode to this river, by Dr Smollett, who was born on the banks of it, within two miles of the place [Cameron] where I am now writing" see *Humphry Clinker*. To Dr Lewis, Aug. 28.

you to come to Caledon next year & you have now no apology Your health thank God is now no impediment & I am told that sugar Spirit excells whiskey itself so your purse must be proportionally distended Charlotte joins in kind Compliments to Mrs Ellis & I ever am Yours most sincerely

W SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 14 *Sept* [1809]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS <sup>1</sup>

I HAVE been silent for a long while my dear Ellis chiefly because I had nothing important to say & I think little comfortable to expect in reply When I received your letter I was deeply & thoroughly impressed with the truths it contains & indeed no one is more convinced than myself that to do himself honor & his country service a minister ought to have a certain degree of absolute power & that the idea of a cabinet of ministers each independent in his own department would be like having a driver not only for every horse but for every *wheel* of your carriage with liberty (were it possible) to give his separate part of the vehicle what movement he might think fit When Robt Dundas was here he sent for me one morning & shewd me in confidence his communication with Canning on the breach in the Administration into which some *agreur* had been naturally enough infused I could not suppress my wish that he had kept clear of any connection with this administration especially as his father neither conceals nor palliates his great disapprobation of almost all the steps they have lately taken On the other hand his situation was really attended with some delicacy for although he did not express it to me I could easily see the great shock which would have been given to his family interest in

<sup>1</sup> This letter is printed here for the first time

Scotland & indeed to the Pittite interest in general by his throwing up office in the Autumn. The numerous party who either from *King-craft* i.e. personal & political attachment to the throne or from views of private advantage exportation of live boys to India & so forth, have a strong tendency to go along with the Monarch would have been necessarily split from those who from personal attachment to the Mellville family, love & reverence for Canning, and devotion to the real interest of the country might have chosen to set themselves in opposition to the present rump of an administration. How far either party could have made their point good it is impossible to guess. But that the Foxites whose party though small is *totus teres & rotundus* would have taken care to pick up all the proselytes who in the midst of the division & subdivision of their former leaders might be terrified for being left without any leaders or principles at all. Upon our little & very subordinate system in Scotland I cannot therefore be sorry that R. Dundas sits still in a ministry which is not likely very long to be sedentary. I presume that all hands will be out immediately & then they will be exactly in the situation of the Knights before the Castle of Malbecco in the Fairy Queen who being shut out of doors in a very rainy evening after a great deal of abuse & quarrelling among themselves at length united in the sensible & salutary project of burning down the door of the inhospitable castle and compelling admittance<sup>1</sup>. I still think Canning must soon come in upon the heads & shoulders of the English nation & must hold that situation which his high principles and talents justly entitle him to claim—and untill he does so it will be impossible to form an administration in which thinking men can repose any confidence. He derives great advantages from the divided and disunited opinions of the opposition respecting their own leaders for it is certain that combined as they are in the disposition to

<sup>1</sup> *The Faerie Queene*, Book III, Canto ix, stanzas 3 18

get in at any rate & united as they must be allowd to be in the efforts by which they endeavour to gain their point they cannot by any means agree which of their chiefs they ought to *proner* as the saviour of his country They cannot unite their voices in favour of one individual idol & summon us to fall down & worship it One adores the golden calves of Stowe another the pure and undefiled Penates of Holland house another the abstruse & mysterious Cabiri of Windham and even the earthborn Mahound and Termagaunt of Burdet & Folkstone have their worshippers This multiplied polytheism will never ultimately succeed

Enough of politics which really vex one & are of no use I should like however to know particularly how Canning is & how far his individual followers are likely to increase I do not think the Ministry will stand many shocks & perhaps they may have the grace to surrender the helm to those who can guide it before the vessell is boarded by the Foxites I have however but little hopes of their doing so sensible a thing

We have got out a play<sup>1</sup> of Joanna Baillie here which was received better than I ever expected to see a tragedy received in this laggard age But I am notwithstanding convinced that the age of the drama has passd away The system of large theatres besides the other disgraceful consequences with which we have lately seen it attended has the necessary effect of depraving the art of acting by compelling the substitution of violent gesture & loud tones for those of real passion & feeling The hours too are only fitted for the inferior & middle classes & totally exclude those of the better ranks who in better times spent a part of their lounging time in the theatres & whose very presence gave a consequence to the art which their judicious criticisms tended to refine & to improve

I believe I told you in my last that I had been engaged for some time past in refitting a Highland tale which I

<sup>1</sup> *The Family Legend* See Vol II, pp 287 96

have entitled the Lady of the Lake but I have been since greatly interrupted by the necessary labour of our Commission business which is now nearly winded up

Charlotte begs her kind compliments to Mrs Ellis My little boy is gone to the high school & has been of late *tam Martis quam Mercurio* having gained forty places during the last fortnight & fought two single combats in both of which he was victorious Remember us kindly to Miss Parker Mrs John Ellis & all our friends who were so kind to us in town last year Believe me ever Dear Ellis yours truly & invariably

WALTER SCOTT

1st february 1810

I will send this under cover to Chas Ellis as it exceeds the bounds of an usual letter in length & is considerably beneath the value of postage

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO RICHARD HEBER, WESTMINSTER, LONDON

MY DEAR HEBER,—I have been disappointed in my London journey this spring but cannot say excepting that I have missed the chance of seeing you and a few friends that I greatly regret the circumstance otherwise—Meanwhile I may say omitting the *parve* which would be rather misapplied—*sine me, liber, ibis in urbem*<sup>1</sup>

Yesterdays Maill transported a copy of our Lady of the Lake picked & chosen from twenty royal copies I hope you will receive it with your usual kindness and as you do in some other cases let good paper & print compensate in some degree for other deficiencies<sup>2</sup> I know not

<sup>1</sup> "Parve, nec invideo, sine me, liber, ibis in urbem"—Ovid, *Tristia*, I, 1

<sup>2</sup> On 14th May Heber writes, extolling *The Lady of the Lake* I admire your Spenserian stanzas, which are constructed most melodiously The Harp of the North was never before so struck or so apostrophized In short, you have done what no writer to the best of my knowledge ever did before—produced in succession & that with trifling intervals 3 great works of genius without the least sensible exhaustion or deterioration of your

whether I shall keep my ground in this affair or not but circumstances rendered the attempt necessary & I made it with a certain degree of caution I shall be glad to hear from you what the knowing ones say upon the subject although to tell you the truth I will judge principally by the Booksellers report of the sale, for I have always thought with Pope that if you carry the people, the high-flying critics must strike flag in the long run

I wrote you a few lines some time ago about a troublesome affair in which I have an interest depending before Parliament It is I fancy already over if not & you find any sweet voices among your Club-friends or else where—let me hear of your weal and *whereabout* & believe me very truly Yours ever

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 8 May [PM 1810]

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—I have not heard from you this long time though all my other letters by Richardson went safe & am rather apprehensive you have not got mine You would learn from Heber that the Compensation business was settled upon the terms of a drawn battle though not till Canning went down to the House on a night particularly inconvenient to him to bid defiance to the Lord Advocate in our behalf—We shall come off

powers Reginald, now in town, swears by her, & can read & think of nothing else only I must tell you he quarrels with his *countryman* for his song of *Peter & Powl*—*Walpole Collection* For “Peter and Poule” see Canto VI, stanza v “The fact is that Scott was almost a consummate master of prosody—wherever he failed, it was not there —Saintsbury *History of English Prosody*, vol III (1910), p 80

<sup>1</sup> This letter, which is printed here for the first time, is dated on the MS by Lockhart “June 16/29 1809” Another hand has corrected to 1810, which is clearly right, as the reference to the ‘Compensation’ shows, and the fact that Scott is in Edinburgh In June 1809 he was in London Also, *The Lady of the Lake* is out For the Compensation business” see Vol II, p 325 note



pretty well & I think make in whole £1200, which will make a very comfortable addition to my income when it pleases heaven to remember my Senior in office I have about as much more of my own with which in Scotland we live better than in England on £2000,—What makes me suspect I have missed some letter is the non-appearance of Madlle Juliana the little greyhound whom I am most impatient to receive If you send her to Murray the Bookseller (Mackenzie having left town without hearing from you) he will take care to have her shipped on board a Smack or our friends Longman & Rees will take the same trouble She may be addressd to the care of Messrs Ballantynes Booksellers in case I am out of town I hope you received the Lady of the Lake & that it is not the fear of my flinching from criticism makes you long in writing—I assure you I can stand the scalpel with anyone & besides I think I shall keep my ground this bout with the vulgar at least

Among all my hopes & fears the uppermost thought is that you will be down this year I have a prospect of a nice jaunt to the Hebrides with a light sloop & eight men belonging to Staffa, MacDonald, who would be delighted to receive you at Ulva—The ladies could remain at Oban if they were afraid of the Sea But you must wipe your minds eye pull up the breeches of your resolution and set forth as soon as possible for we must get to the Hebrides early in July unless we mean to encounter long nights & tempestuous weather—Dont think I am proposing a long or dangerous party for the whole may be done (seeing the Long Island even) in a fortnight from Edinburgh and in summer you may sail even through the gulph of Corrivrekin celebrated by Leyden<sup>1</sup> without any danger excepting from the Mermaids

<sup>1</sup> Scott refers particularly to two lines of stanza x in Leyden's "The Mermaid," *Border Minstrelsy* (ed Henderson 1902), iv, p 288

"Shun, O shun, the gulf profound,  
Where Corrivrekin's surges roar!"

For Sir John Sinclair and the Mermaids see Vol II, p 419 and note Sir

who by Sir John Sinclairs account (which I take to be the latest) are not half so amorous as formerly & certainly would not fall in love with two old married men

What an odd political atmosphere you live in—I suppose you will have an explosion on Sir Fr Burdett's liberation from the Tower But all these volcanic eruptions are not worth minding and only serve to give the people an opportunity to huzza themselves hoarse & then they must hold their tongues of course But I wonder those who have property to lose & trade to be interrupted in the City don't tire of these mobbish proceedings—I see Squire Cobbet has at last run his neck into a noose—I wish it were one of Jack Ketch's constructing for he is a very sad dog McKenzie brings down an odd report from the better circles that he is said to be in direct communication with Bonaparte To be sure he is playing his game setting one description of our armed force against the other & the people against the Government I wish you would trust him with us & I think he would publish his Registers in Botany Bay before he had completed a volume in the Land of Cakes — So the Duke of Cumberland has got himself slashed to pieces for nothing at all, at all <sup>1</sup>, and his grand uncle the Scotch Duke William after burning & slaughtering to right & left among our unfortunate Caledonians went peaceably & quietly to an unbloodied grave I can't help thinking that some of the curses which I used to hear vollied against him when I was a boy have by some strange accident missed their way & being misdirected to the door of the present inheritor of his title have occasioned this melancholy mistake in retribution

How comes on the quarterly—folks here on both sides are quarrelling with the Edinburgh for being neither

Francis Burdett had been conveyed to the Tower of London on political charges William Cobbett, the essayist and politician, was imprisoned for two years (1810-12) in Newgate and fined £1000 for his strictures on the flogging of militiamen by German mercenaries

<sup>1</sup> For this see Vol II, pp 350, 351 and note 1

democratical nor (what shall I call them) Whiggish Gray & his friends never will forgive the planting them on the Isthmus Surely among you you can make some fun of this business of Mother Clarkes<sup>1</sup> Folkstone will never get over the eating strawberries like "hermit poor in pensive place" It [is] permitted to a politician to be as unprincipled and wicked as he pleases but not to be ridiculous—that is the most dreadful rock he can split upon

Once more remember you set forth as soon as possible Staffa (I mean the *Laird* not the *island*) has been just here to say how happy he will think himself in seeing you & he is a right & tight highland Chief Mrs Ellis & Miss Julia will I hope be of the party Charlotte will join them & we'll all go merrily north together & then you shall rest yourself *long long* in the Forest at Ashestiel Ever yours

W SCOTT

EDINR 16 June [1810]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>2</sup>—I received your letter this morning & had previously got back from Mackenzie that which I puzzled you by referring to Its principal object being to solicit your assistance in our canvass in parliament &

<sup>1</sup> Mary Anne Clarke (1776-1852), the mistress of Frederick, Duke of York She had been bribed to use her influence to obtain army promotion from the Duke, at this time commander in chief She was examined by the House of Commons in 1809 This scandalous case produced numerous pamphlets, the most curious being Mrs Clarke's own book, *The Rival Princes* (second ed 1810), in which she attacked those who had brought on the investigation, Wardle, Lord Folkestone, and J W Croker In the course of a letter to her (which she prints) from "Coleshill House," Lord Folkestone said he had been doing little but "wander about the fields by myself, and eat strawberries," so that Mrs Clarke's letter has given such a hermit as himself matter on which he "might chew the cud of reflection for many a day"—*Op cit*, II, pp 114-15 In 1813 she was condemned to nine months' imprisonment for libel

<sup>2</sup> This letter is printed here for the first time 'Mackenzie' is Colin Mackenzie

that canvas[s] being terminated by a compromise this gentleman one of our number who had attended upon our joint concerns in town, brought back a good many of the letters with which he had been armed and yours among others I am glad he has done so as it would have only given you the trouble of speaking & perhaps writing to some of your friends about a dispute which has terminated amicably Mackenzie speaks in terms of great gratitude for the interest Mr Canning took in our matters & not less admiration of the intuitive quickness of his apprehension of a business to which he was a total stranger & which was enveloped in barbarous law language and official technicalities I suppose the mad freaks of Sir Francis Burdett will have the undesirable effect of strengthening the hands of the present Administration & of course that the Man in Britain who could best keep the steerage way of our vessel will be excluded from the helm by mean jealousy of his superior talents

Poor Sir Peter <sup>1</sup> Yet why should we say so, since life loses all its relish with the decay of body & mind necessarily attendant on extreme old age It is too good an apology which his situation furnishes for delaying the long promised tour to Ashestiel But I hope you will come next year because it is the last year of my lease of the farm though I shall endeavour to have it renewed, or to find out some other place to turn myself to grass at during the harvest months I find it of great consequence both to my own health & that of the children I long to see Juliana <sup>1</sup> & am quite prepared for her present appearance the thickness of legs & head render a greyhound in its puppyhood singularly awkward in appearance I hope Murray will take precautions about shipping her safely which will be the easiest & safest way of sending her down Perhaps he may find some passenger willing

<sup>1</sup> The hound, Lady Juliana Berners See Vol II, pp 362 63, with part of Ellis's letter of 30th June in note, p 363

to take particular charge of her for the promise of a suitable acknowledgement from her friends on her safe arrival

I am very much obliged to you for your exertions in behalf of *The Lady of the Lake* I don't know what turn the Edinr Reviewers will take—Jeffrey is said in private to talk very highly but that is no rule for his public criticism for 'I've] seen him weep warm tears over Wordsworths poetry & you know how he treats the poor Balladmaker when he is mounted into the Scorner's chair<sup>1</sup> I am sensible of the imperfection of Malcolm Graemes part of the story, but it is particularly difficult to give interest to that kind of character and to have introduced more incident would have rendered my narrative heavy I don't know why but drawing lovers is not my talent I always come best off with a captain of banditti or an augur or a conjurer or some such *Salvator Rosa* piece of business I wished the character of the King to be most prominent through the piece but I am not sure whether the Highland Chief does not put him down You do not mention having got your own copy of the *Lady of the Lake* from our fathers which are on the Row I hope it has come safe for the quartos have almost all disappeared & I could hardly replace it

I wish we could manage to get out our Review more regularly but I know how difficult it is to command an army of Volunteers who have generally more spirit than

<sup>1</sup> Ellis writes on 22nd October "I really am anxious to know, and you do not tell me, whether you were tolerably satisfied with my critique on the *Lady of the Lake* I trust however that, such as it was, it did some good to Jeffry [*sic*], by showing him that there had been in his remarks on *Marmion* at least a strong appearance of personal malice which, when deprived of the thin veil by which he had covered it, could not do him honour in the world, and it is certain that his critique on the *Lady of the Lake* has occasioned universal astonishment by its apparent contrast to his former opinions I perceived with great satisfaction the embarrassment under which he wrote, and I venture to prophesy that he will not in future think it advisable to brandish the rod of criticism over you with so much arrogance"—*Walpole Collection* For Jeffrey's apologetic letter concerning his review see Vol II, p 381 and note 1

discipline Yet if the sale really amounts as the Bookseller says to 4000 or 5000 copies it must be taking deep root and shooting far and wide It must do essential good if such really be the case for people are beginning to take great alarm at the avowed objects of Sir Francis Burdett for which the Edinburgh Review seems of late to hold forth their sanction I hear there is something of the same kind spreading in London & if so we may borrow Lees verses<sup>1</sup> & say

'tis a good horror  
First let them fear for rapes & plunderd houses  
Cold Burgheis must be struck & struck like flints  
Ere their hid fire will sparkle—

I cannot help strongly suspecting that the more desperate part of this faction hold a communication with Bonaparte probably through the O'Connors At least these worthy brethren take their conjoind measures with as much regularity for disturbing the harmony of this country as if they had communicated by the Arabian Magicians box of sand or the sympathetic alphabet mentiond in the Spectator Sir Francis himself I take to be a vain tool whose fear however seems in a late instance to have overcome his vanity What are supposed to have been his private reason for the half-faced fellowship which he afforded his committee? I suppose besides fear he felt ashamed to march his ragged regiment through Coventry You would see that without going out of my way I contrived to jostle him a little in the Lady of the Lake<sup>2</sup>

My last letter was enclosed in a packet to Gifford which went through Crokers office where it may have been delayd I will send this straight way to Sunninghill without mercy on your pocket You will not hear more

<sup>1</sup> "Lees verses" Elsewhere Scott gives the verses to Dryden See Vol II, p 344 The play was a joint work of Dryden and Lee

<sup>2</sup> Probably Scott refers to Douglas's speech, beginning "Hear, gentle friends! etc," in Canto V, stanza xxviii

of me till I return from the island of Colonsay & the Gulf of Corrievrekan for which I set forward this week

Mrs Scott joins in kind love to Mrs Ellis and Miss Julia Parker Our little folks have got quite stout again  
Ever yours affectionately

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 6 July 1810

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

To GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,—I have been scandalously lazy in answering your kind epistle received I don't know how long since<sup>1</sup> And so there is the short and long of my longs and shorts

The news from Portugal continue flattering it is much to have brought the French to a Fabian system of warfare The great talents of their Generals the dazzling rapidity of their movements the ardour and decision with which they used to strike at the very heart of their adversaries seem for once to have totally failed them and the lustre of their arms is tarnished in proportion Bonaparte no doubt may and probably will make a grand effort But if we could persuade the Spaniards to repose as much confidence in Lord Wellington as the wiser Portuguese I think it would be a vain one, especially as his finances are horribly deranged so that he already feels the difficulty of maintaining & regularly paying those forces which by the usual order of the day should long ere now have been rewarded for their conquest by the spoils of the vanquished peninsula

<sup>1</sup> For the omitted portion from "but then I had been long your creditor" to "my longs and shorts" see Vol II pp 346 8 There we were misled by the omission of any date, and by the position given to the extract in *Lockhart*, into placing it conjecturally in May or June of 1810, following the review by Ellis in *The Quarterly* for May of that year But that number was probably issued long after May The final paragraphs and date show that the letter was written while Scott was spending his usual Christmas vacation at Mertoun House

Meanwhile we are in a most puzzling situation at home. Some suppose the P will alter his views of parties when he enters on power, which however I doubt greatly & if he changes Marquis Wellesly I suppose we shall lose the advantage of his Brother[s] talents—I wish to God he would try our friend Geo Canning who I think took an excellent line in the Debate

Charlotte is here eating our minced pies with my friend & Chief Mr Scott of Harden. All good things of the season attend Mrs Ellis & you in which wish she cordially joins. God bless you

W SCOTT

MERTOUN HOUSE 23 Decr 1810

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO RICHARD HEBER, STAG BREWHOUSE,<sup>1</sup> YORK STREET,  
WESTMINSTER

I DROP you these few lines under one of Longmans covers to acquaint you with the favourable result of our squabble about the judicature bill in which you kindly interested yourself on behalf of the oppressd Clerks of Session. You may remember that the threatend opposition in the House of Com ended in a reference to the Barons of Exchequer of our claims for farther compensation above £1100 provided by the Act. We offerd to the Advocate to compound for £1200 in all but the Barons after mature & repeated investigation of our claims have fixd our compensation at £1300,, a year and a corresponding advance to our Deputes. My Colleague Mr Home has declined the surplus in my favour so I am just £200 a year richer for our stand in the House & that in possession instead of reversion—For as a master of

<sup>1</sup> Mr W A Marsden Keeper of Printed Books British Museum informs us that in Holden's *Triennial Director*, for 1802 the Business section has "Heber Richard brewer, stag brewhouse, Pimlico, and the 'Private' Heber Mr Richard, Esq Pimlico"



rhyme & grammar had depicted on a sign in the town of Dalkeith

A bird in hand is better fai  
Than two that in the bushes is

I am very glad of this termination also because as my freinds must have taken the justice of our case pretty much on my credit this favourable issue upon solemn trial will show the ground on which I invoked their assistance & that our demand was not only just but moderate

I have seen Mr Tempest occasionally & his tutor a fine chattering old gossip of a Catholic priest

Love to Reginald<sup>1</sup>—ask him if like the foolish bard in the Gaelic proverb he has burnd his harp for a woman ? for I think we have not heard it since his marriage Ever yours

W SCOTT

CASTLE STREET 7th february [PM 1811]

[Cholmondeley]

TO RICHARD HEBER

MY DEAR HEBER,—I have but a few minutes to write as I wish to send you by this post a copy of Don Roderick He has moved a Spanish pace in comparasion to most of my poetical attempts which has been chiefly or entirely owing to the interruption my labours sustaind from the melancholy events mentiond in the preface I don't know if you are so great an admirer of Spencer as I am or whether you will allow of an imitation of his style without the rust of his *y-clads misers* and other peculiarities of phrase and orthography I have studiously resisted all temptation to use complicated and involved construction and I hope the *sense* such as it is will be so evident that he who runs may read

I do not know where this may find you whether exer-

<sup>1</sup> Heber writes on 6th February 'All here are well & busily employed Tom hunts, I farm & plant—Reg[inald] cures souls & reads *Plato* in his shooting jacket' —*Walpole Collection*

cising the fox-tail<sup>1</sup> over the piled treasures in your brick mansion of Westminster or playing the Squire at Shrewsbury In either case Mrs Scott sends her kindly greeting You must know we meditate a great revolution You have seen and I suppose have at least three copies of the "*introuvable*" pamphlet intitled *A poet hath bought him a house* But an event has occurred on Tweedside which should make a much stronger sensation in the literary world than even that memorable event for behold<sup>1</sup> a poet hath bought himself a farm

It is a little place about three miles up<sup>•</sup> the Tweed from Melrose embracing a half mile of the rivers bank and consequently affording a good situation for a cottage I am of course busy with Price<sup>2</sup> and all manner of essays on picturesque scenery and am very anxious to increase the plantations which though young are thriving The value of the property is about £150 a year, the extent 120 acres I dare say the expence it will put me to will cost me another poem let the critics say what they please

Adieu dear Heber God bless you

W SCOTT

EDINR 1 July [1811]

Love to your brother reginald Is he entirely lost to the Muses<sup>2</sup> We remain at Ashestiel for this season when my lease is out

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>3</sup>—I send a Spaniard to wait upon you in whose good intentions you will I know sympathise

<sup>1</sup> For dusting his books Scott himself used one

<sup>2</sup> Sir Uvedale Price, for whom see Vol III, p 240 note

<sup>3</sup> This letter, printed here for the first time, evidently accompanied a copy of *Don Roderick*, published 1st July 1811 On 28th July Ellis says he finds much to admire with enthusiasm in the poem 'There is throughout a regularity of excellence which Jeffrey, I think, will look at with some dismay You talk about migrations as coolly as if, like you, I could slip

whatever you may think of the execution which has been painfully interrupted by the two melancholy events alluded to in the preface And now my dear Ellis what do you mean to do this season I hope to step northward & I hope so more especially because this is the last season we shall be at Ashestiel The next year if we be all spared I intend to take possession of a little farm which I have bought in order to build myself a bower I would I could add "in good green-wood" we have a few plantations however and will plant more and as my little domain stretches about half a mile along the banks of the Tweed—there a fine bold & rapid stream—I think we shall be able to build a pleasant cottage Meanwhile we intend to pry<sup>1</sup> as well as we can into a little farm house of only four rooms & that makes me peremptory that you should come down this year because the next year we shall have no quarters for you & life is too short to calculate upon 1813 Whereas at Ashestiel we have plenty of accommodation such as it is The black greyhound bitch alone is worth a visit to Scotland She is a perfect beauty & as fleet as the wind—rather shy of mouthing yet owing to a drubbing she got for coquetting with a sheep in a suspicious manner but I hope she will make the necessary distinction this season

Mrs Scott joins in anxious hope to see you and sends kindest love to Mrs Ellis and I am in great haste always yours truly

EDIN 1 July [1811]

WALTER SCOTT

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

my neck out of that same quarterly collar by which it is sorely wrung and from which I find it impossible to escape out of the reach of Gifford's lash, or as if I had nothing to do but to get into a carriage, and to exclaim to the postillions 'drive on my lads' But at present Ellis is sore pressed financially owing to various recent purchases "I therefore must, perforce, be satisfied for the present with that picture of Ashestiel which imagination has long since drawn"—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>1</sup> He probably means "to squeeze"

## TO GEORGE ELLIS

MY DEAR ELLIS,<sup>1</sup>—I owe you a long letter but you owe me a visit of which you have feloniously cheated me so that is not my present grief I will pay however my debt cheerfully and honestly in a few days when you shall learn all the doughty improvements I am meditating upon a patch of land which may be termed naked even in Scotland & which I am adorning with trees *facturæ nepotibus umbram* for I shall never live to enjoy their shade myself otherwise than in the recumbent posture of Tityrus or Menalcas But my present business is to introduce my brother a man upon whom fortune turnd her back in spite of many excellent properties natural and acquired He has been rather late in life & for the support of a large family induced to accept the paymastership of the 70th regimt where Colonel General Ross is his wifes near relation But on coming to London some rub has taken place relative to the former paymaster who was to have retired on full pay on account of bad health & long services I understand Lord Palmerstone hesitates whether he can permit his retirement to take place immediatly or whether he must wait for a medical certificate from the West Indies It is probable that a little personal interest with Lord P may induce him to wave this latter cause of delay which is a considerable hardship on my brother who with limited finances and a large family to support must wait the issue in London I think Lord Palmerstone is a man of letters and have some how taken it into my mind that he is known to you If so & if you can serve my brother in this matter it will oblige me inexpressibly Poor fellow he has had a hard tussle with ill luck which I would fain hope

<sup>1</sup> This letter, also unprinted, was taken to London by Tom Scott in 1811, when he was seeking to be appointed paymaster to the 70th regiment See note in Vol III, p 5 and letters there Tom in his letters tells how he failed to find Ellis To Heber on 17th October Scott wrote a letter almost identical with the above It is in the Cholmondelev Collection

may now tire of persecuting him. He is a special chronicle of old plays & old poetry especially the former and upon the whole a very pleasant companion which in the early part of his life was of bad consequence to him, as his love of society and the habits of indolence which attend it occasioned his affairs some years since falling into a perplexed state. He is now freed from all his embarrassments but the reversion of his property is very inadequate to maintain his wife and numerous family. I would fain think he may now have a chance of once more getting afloat in active life as if his regiment goes to the East or West Indies he may find opportunities of mending his situation.

Mrs Scott received Mrs Ellis's letter by the Capt of the Nightingale<sup>1</sup>. I wrote to him immediately to express my regret we were not in Edinr when he called & to hope his stay in our seas would admit of our seeing him frequently. Mrs Scott sends best love to Mrs Ellis & I ever am yours faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 18th October [1811]

If you can see my brother I think you will like him & so will Mrs E

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO RICHARD HEBER

MY DEAR HEBER,—As I conclude you will be a constant attendant on the Roxburgh[e] Sale I will make no apology for troubling you with the care of looking after a few trifling articles for me or putting the commission into such hands as you may think safe. I should have gone much deeper were I not very busy just now in *bea[u]tifying* a little purchase which I have made about three miles above Melrose & which is at present in a state of primitive

<sup>1</sup> Perhaps the Capt Nixon mentioned in letter to Ellis, 9th January 1813, p 340

nakedness Now I shall not put on my leafy clothing quite so gratuitously as our parents did their fig-leaf breeches So I am getting deep into nursery men's books not to mention a set of offices which are rising not like "some tall palm" but rather like a bur-dock<sup>1</sup> However as I have flung mine ancient rider George Home not upon the ground but upon the broad shoulders of the public who have granted him a superannuation allowance I cannot resist sporting forty or by our lady some fifty pounds in St James's Square<sup>2</sup> I shall content myself with inclosing a list of the books I should like to have marking those with a cross X concerning which I am anxious and leaving the prices entirely to you I am desirous to complete my *witchery* in which line I am already very sprag<sup>3</sup> & forward You will act for me as for yourself only recollecting that my opportunities of picking up rarities do not so frequently occur as with you I dont apologize for the trouble which you must consider as a little brush to the chain of freindship & now to other matters

Alas for poor John Leyden<sup>4</sup> his active & indefatigable spirit has at length worn out its clay tenement I have promised to fullfill an old engagement & to collect his Remains<sup>4</sup> unless I learn that he has made some final

<sup>1</sup> See "Palestine A Prize Poem, recited in the Theatre, Oxford, in the year mccccm in Reginald Heber's *Poems and Translations* (new ed., 1829), p 13

"Then tower'd the palace, then in awful state  
The Temple rear'd its everlasting gate  
No workman steel, no ponderous axes rung,  
Like some tall palm the noiseless fabric sprung

The resemblance to a burdock is, we suppose in its appearance to the eve

<sup>2</sup> The Duke of Roxburghe's late residence where his library was sold by auction The Roxburghe sale (18th May 1812), which started a new era in British book collecting, reached the phenomenal total of £23,341 The Roxburghe Club was inaugurated in commemoration of the sale of the celebrated "Valdarfer Boccaccio" (1471), which realised £2260 See S de Ricci, *English Collectors of Books and Manuscripts 1530 1930* (1930), pp 71 2

<sup>3</sup> "Sprag" (rare) = smart, clever — *N E D*

<sup>4</sup> From "Denholm Dean on 1st January Robert Leyden had written that he and his parents concur to Scott's proposal "On parting with my Brother at the Turf Coffee House he told me that in case he might die in

arrangement Murray the Editor of Bruce's travels is to take the Oriental part Genl Malcolm has written a very good article in the Bombay Courier with some pretty verses to Leyden's memory He gives some very interesting anecdotes and touches his character & peculiarities with great truth & kindly feeling If you have not seen these I will inclose them in my next

I had just written thus far when we are stund by the report of Percevals murder<sup>1</sup>—God help us what are [we] come to—the central provinces of England are as wild as those of Munster & Connaught and unblemished integrity & the highest talents cannot save the premier of England from assassination in the very house of Commons Crimes proper hitherto to the most barbarous periods of history seem to revive in the midst [of] civilization and it seems as if the very frame of society were crumbling beneath us & around us What the inflammatory harangues of the demagogues in the House of Commons have had to do with this horrible atrocity we can only guess but I will venture to say that they would prove as unfit for guiding us out of the dangers in which the Country is involved as Sampsons foxes & firebrands would be for lighting home a drunken philistine whose cornyard they had very satisfactorily set on fire But I will write no more on this subject & have not now the heart to write on any other  
Yours ever

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 14 May [1812]

I keep the inclosed list numerous because many of the articles may go at an exorbitant value When you write

India he would leave directions that you should publish his literary remains, this was the last conversation I had with him, and I am certain Mr Murray will render you every assistance in his power —*Walpole Collection* This scheme never materialised *The Poetical Remains of the late Dr John Leyden, with Memoirs of His Life, by the Rev James Morton*, did not appear till 1819 'Murray is Alexander Murray (1775 1813), the linguist, who not only edited Bruce's works, but wrote his biography

<sup>1</sup> For which see Vol III, p 125 and note 2

to me let me know what is likely to happen in the political sphere in consequence of this bloody & fatal eclipse I hope Canning will come in

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO RICHARD HEBER

MANY THANKS my dear Heber for your kind attention to my little commission This will be deliverd to you by Mr Terry of the Haymarket lately of the Edinr theatre a man of uncommon powers in his profession, of great general information and in every respect a remarkably well behaved and pleasant person He is a great student of the old dramatists and has helped me to pass many a pleasant sunday evening both here & at Ashestiel He was bred under Wyat<sup>1</sup> & is a beautiful draughtsman If you give him a breakfast in your *redut* at Westminster you will be pleased with him he is very modest and unprofessional in his manners having none of the pedantry which usually attaches to heroes of the Buskin

I scarce know what to say about my further order for I fear the articles I would like are absolutely sour grapes I will mark a few however though I fear they will go greatly above my commission

How has your friend Masquerier<sup>2</sup> succeeded in painting Miss Baillie? if tolerably I must manage to get a copy cabinet size but poor M has a heavy hand

I presume you will get a markd catalogue of this great sale with prices & buyers If you will trust me with it for a fortnight I would esteem it a great kindness & it might go & come safely by post under Mr Frelings cover I never saw so many romances though in other respects the Library scarce answers my expectation Blessing on

<sup>1</sup> i.e. James Wyatt (1746-1813), the architect

<sup>2</sup> John James Masquerier, the painter, with whom Scott had corresponded in 1803 See p. 378 and note



Geo Nichols learning<sup>1</sup> What queer names & marks he has found out His *Ordo venditionis* puzzled me not a little untill I received it

Pray when your bustle is over scribble a few lines about your self,<sup>2</sup> Reginald, Ellis & so forth As for politics I ask none for I augur nothing good I wish I had the knocking of our friends heads together for their immeasurable folly One that sees the world from the loophole of retreat may now in good earnest conclude public men were all crazy  
Ever yours W SCOTT

EDINR 11<sup>th</sup> June [1812]

I want much to know where 6354 the Morte Arthur of De Worde<sup>3</sup> goes as I have never relinquishd my plan of republishing that curious book

We shall be at Rokeby probably in July What chance is there of our meeting together once more ?

[Cholmondeley]

TO RICHARD HEBER

MY DEAR HEBER,—I have been in the country on a stolen trip of a few days during which I was out the whole day and very sleepy at night which alone could justify my ungrateful silence respecting your kind and efficient agency at the Roxburghe Sale<sup>4</sup> I will stand the Huon with delight for in my opinion it is the most beautiful of the

<sup>1</sup> Oldbuck applies this phrase to Baillie Littlejohn See *The Antiquary*, Border Ed., II, chap. xviii, p. 219 This should have been the phrase in correctly given in our Vol. IV, p. 331, line 30, where for harmony read learning 'The Roxburghe Library Sale Catalogue (1812) was "arranged by G. and W. Nicol, Booksellers to His Majesty, Pall Mall On one page, below a list of abbreviations there is printed "The *Ordo Venditionis* will be delivered as soon as the extent of the Sale is ascertained'

<sup>2</sup> Commas inserted to avoid confusion of names

<sup>3</sup> Item 6354 of the *Roxb. Sale Cat.*, p. 175

<sup>4</sup> On 16th June Heber had reported on the Sale "Without heavy metal, nothing was to be done I begged off all the great collections in your name, & succeeded for 6141 the Montglave otherwise you wd have paid in the same proportion for the Huon de Bourdeaux I did not like losing what you seemed to wish for so much—especially as you may put it

old Romances & paying a round sum for it compared with what is given for similar works is like the difference between a Countess and your most estimable Fuzer Pray let me know how much I am in your debt that I may remit without loss of time as Exchange always makes a difference here as well as delay And mind I expect *over and above free, gratis, and void of all expence* whatsoever a copy of an interesting publication which I observe this day advertized for the first time namely POEMS BY THE REVD REGINALD HEBER<sup>1</sup> if you happen to know such a person Mr Freling or Croker will give me an office frank as the Volume I conclude is not of great dimensions I conclude the fever of your Bibliomania<sup>2</sup> as our facetious Dibdin hath it has not quite subsided but when your pulse beats temperately I shall be delighted to hear your opinion of the late sale which you must be so far pleased with since it proves your library to be I guess 100 per Ct overhead more valuable than when you bought it Ever Yours truly

EDINR 1st July [1812]

WALTER SCOTT

I am greatly indebted to you for frightening the crows from the carrion as to my other articles I believe the whole had best be committed to the care of Our fathers which are in the Row vizt Longman & Co

[Cholmondeley]

in the Advocates Library when you tire of it the bibliomania seems to be the order of the day — *Walpole Collection* The Montglave is L Hystoire de Guerin de Montglave, 4to MV Paris — *Roxb Sale Cat*, p 169 see also *ALC* p 119, where the title is given in full On 4th January 1813 Scott sends Heber a short letter, desiring to settle up with him for the book purchases, and, alluding to *Rokeby*, says It cost nearly about the same labour [as *The Lady of the Lake*] namely three months pretty tight work (see our Vol III p 220) It is to be sure very foolish to be so hasty but I have so little patience with my own rhymes that I remind myself of poor Singing Jemmie Balfour who could run a race when he could neither walk nor stand This letter is in the Cholmondeley Collection

<sup>1</sup> *Poems and Translations*, 12mo London 1812

<sup>2</sup> See 'The Bibliomania, An Epistle, to Richard Heber, Esq,' in the second edition of John Ferrier's *Illustrations of Sterne, etc* (1812), II, p 201

What wild desires, what restless torments seize

The hapless man, who feels the book disease, etc "

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN,  
37 YORK STREET, DUBLIN

SIR,—I am favoured with your letter<sup>1</sup> and have only to regret that you should have attachd so much consequence to the opinion of one who has found it in literary matters extremely fallible. My attention was indeed very strongly excited both by the House of Montorio and the Irish tale which it was impossible to confound with the usual stile of novels as they bear strong marks of a powerful imagination and a very uncommon command of language and excite upon the whole a very deep though painful interest. I have regretted if you will forgive me writing with so much freedom that the author had not in some respects rendered his fictions more generally acceptable by mitigating some of their horror and I am rather confirmd in this opinion by those to whom I have recommended a perusal of the volumes & on whose taste I am accusomd to rely much more than on my own. But the redundancies of a powerful fancy can be brought within the rules of a more chastend taste and the lighter graces are usually within the attainment of those who can strike the higher tones of composition. It is therefore with the greatest pleasure that I express the opinion I have ventured to form of your powers for your compositions since it cannot be otherwise than highly favourable<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Of 18th December 1812 in which, after describing himself as ‘an obscure Irishman,’ he asks if Scott has really read *Montorio*, “and thought its author worthy to stand even in the humble ranks of literature?”—if you have, do not hesitate to say so, it will certainly confer honor and happiness on one who has hitherto known little of life but labour, distress and difficulty and who has borrowed the gloomy colouring of his own pages from the shade of obscurity and Misfortune under which his existence has been wasted”—*Walpole Collection*. The above is the earliest letter we have discovered from Scott to Maturin, the novelist, for whom see Vol. III, p. 257 and note. For a study of Maturin, giving Scott's relations with him and analyses of Maturin's works, see N. Idman, *Charles Robert Maturin: His Life and Works* (Constable & Co., Ltd. 1923). Scott writes the name in different ways, viz. Maturin, Maturine, and Mathurine.

<sup>2</sup> Maturin had published *The Fatal Revenge, or, the Family of Montorio* in 1807 under the pseudonym of “Dennis Jasper Murphy,” and, in his review

I regret to observe that you ascribe to unpleasant circumstances the darker shades of your compositions, & would be happy to think that you do not number among those that of being a professional author. For literature though an excellent staff has always proved a wretched crutch to those who relied upon it entirely for support. Indeed I have been long satisfied that the only way to make literary compositions profitable is to be independent of the income they may occasionally produce and to write only when you please and as you please. This is only to be attained by the assiduous cultivation of some other profession in the course of which it usually happens that literary reputation honorably & justly acquired will incidentally be serviceable to the possessor.

You see Sir you have a very frank correspondent. But I am now a veteran scribbler though not an old man & would feel particular pleasure if any of the experience I have acquired could be in the slightest degree acceptable to the Author of *Montorio*. I am Sir

[unsigned]

EDINR [PM 28 Dec 1812]

[*University of Texas*]

TO GEORGE ELLIS

Direct to Edinburgh as I must return there on Monday

MY DEAR ELLIS,—I am sure you will place it to any thing rather than want of kindness<sup>1</sup>. Charlotte is with me just now at this little scrub habitation, where we

of it in *The Quarterly Review*, vol. III No. VI, May 1810, Scott took exception to the preponderance of horror. "Few people can afford timidity enough for the writer's purpose who is determined on 'horrifying' them through three thick volumes." If the author be indeed, as he describes himself, young and inexperienced, without literary friend, or counsellor, we earnestly exhort him to seek one on whose taste and judgment he can rely.—pp. 346-7. "The Irish tale" is *The Wild Irish Boy* (1808).

<sup>1</sup> This letter, practically complete, is printed from *Lockhart* in Vol. III, pp. 200-2. For "son of Lancelot Gibb" read of course 'sire'. The error goes back to *Lockhart*. We print here the last paragraph of the letter for some small points. This is the last of the letters contained in the volume now in the Pierpont Morgan Library, New York.

weary ourselves all day in looking at our projected improvements, & slumber over the fire, I pretending to read, and she to work trout-nets or cabbage nets or some such article We both join in kindest love to Mrs Ellis We have the pleasure to see Capt Nixon whenever he comes from his frozen cruize on the coast of Norway or Jutland I am glad to find he has been rather successful in captures By the way, it is a sin & shame the Americans should have such advantages that way What is Canning about?<sup>1</sup> is there any chance of our getting him in? Surely Ministers cannot hope to do without him? I have many compliments from my brother Tom who regretted extremely the business which detained him in Londn & prevented his coming down to Sunninghill Believe me dear Ellis Ever most truly Yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 9 *January* [1813]

When do we see Windham?

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO THE REV<sup>D</sup> CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

YOUR LETTER my dear Sir has occasioned me much reflection I would willingly do any thing that lies in my power and that power is very limited to be of service to a gentleman possessing your talents and labouring under

<sup>1</sup> Ellis replies on 24th January "With regard to Canning I can give you no intelligence of a very recent date Thus far, however, is perfectly evident—that the Cabinet, having thus far preserved their places by the incompressible folly of opposition and by their own adherence to their *round robin*, are determined to do without him if possible, and that they hope to do without him in consequence of the impossibility of his joining with the present leaders of opposition, & of the improbability of his being able to unite, under his separate banner, a party at all equal in numbers to that which the influence of the Crown has placed at their disposal What will be the consequence of their determination it is not easy to foresee I hope you will have already assured your brother that the regrets which he was so kind as to express were sincerely shared by me, and that Sunning Hill, of which the principal merit in my eyes is the society which it contains, & occasionally invites, would have been endeared to me had it afforded me the pleasure of his acquaintance"—*Walpole Collection*

circumstances so uncommonly distressing The resources of literature are unfortunately limited Magazines Reviews and almost all such periodical publications are either wretchedly paid or over-stocked with labourers The success of the *Edinr Review* has excited a host of ephemeral publications of the same kind which do good to no one but the booksellers & sometimes not even to them The only one in which I take [an] interest is called the *Edinr Register* the historical part is conducted by Southey & very ably Nevertheless with all the propping it has received the success is totally inadequate to affording much copy-money I also took some share in the *Quarterly Revw* being willing that a work on these principles should be set afloat It has succeeded admirably but is entirely under the management of Mr Gifford and my laziness with other circumstances have long made me content myself with the occupation of a gentle reader Under these circumstances Sir you see how trifling any assistance of mine could be as to these periodical publications But indeed if I could make my good wishes more effectual in this department I would earnestly dissuade you from engaging in it unless as a temporary amusement or accomodation You would scarcely believe how indifferently such labour is in general rewarded and how much it occupies of leisure that might be much better employd I have been long induced to think that literature should be used rather as a mode of making its professors known & of paving their way in some of the learned professions, than relied upon as a mode of livelihood, or even of considerable emolument I do not pretend to understand or estimate the nature of the theological difficulties which obstruct your rise in your profession<sup>1</sup> If they are "stuff o' the conscience" there

<sup>1</sup> For what Maturin had written on 11th January to Scott about his father's misfortunes see Scott's letter to Lady Abercorn, Vol. III, pp 257 8 Maturin adds "His interest too was lost and their Graces and Lordships the Archbishops and Bishops who had so often feasted at his table, would not now spare him the offals of theirs From the Church I have

is no more to be said but I should think that if they refer to a mere difference in points of speculative doctrine on which the best men have differed and which the wisest can hardly pretend to understand prudence upon your part and candour and liberality on that of others might prevent their being an effectual bar to your promotion Or if this way be quite blocked up something might be thought of to eke out your present most unpleasant situation I will endeavour to find out some way to your Viceroy<sup>1</sup> who is a Scotsman as well as his wife & you know we Scotsmen have a strange way of hanging together

In the mean time what do you think of trying a romance<sup>2</sup> I would willingly recommend it to my publishers here the Messrs Ballantynes & as I have a special interest with them I have no doubt of making it more effectual in point of profit than it could be otherwise And we would contrive some way of drawing the public attention particularly to the book & the author A lady of my ac-

no expectations for exclusive of the loss of my father's former interest, I am a high Calvinist in my Religious opinions, and therefore viewed with jealousy by Unitarian Brethren and Arminian Masters —*Walpole Collection* The father is William Maturin

<sup>1</sup> Charles Lennox (1764-1819), fourth Duke of Richmond, only son of Lieut Genl Lord George Henry Lennox, by Louisa, daughter of William Henry, fourth Marquess of Lothian He married in 1789 Charlotte, daughter of Alexander, fourth Duke of Gordon In April 1807 he was appointed Lord Lieutenant of Ireland

On 15th February Maturin replies, expressing gratitude for Scott's kindness to an unworthy stranger "This is an effort which raises the heart of Walter Scott to the same eminence as his Genius, and (perhaps for the first time in the Records of Humanity) places the Man on a level with the Poet" At present he is writing a poetical romance "I have determined to display all my *diabolical* resources, out Herod all the Herods of the German school, and get the possession of the Magic lamp with all its slaves from the Conjurer *Lewis* himself I fear however they will never build a palace of *Gold* for me as they did for their Master Aladdin I had the honor of being in the Bishop of Meath's diocese for upwards of a year He knows me well, and can and will I am convinced bear most favorable attestations to my Character, conduct and abilities—your mention of him was, I trust, an auspicious one, there is no one to whom I would more readily appeal for a Confirmation of all I have presumed to say of myself"—*Walpole Collection* For the Bishop see Vol III, pp 77-8, note He married in 1783 Jane, only surviving child of the Hon Francis Stuart, third son of Francis, seventh Earl of Moray

quaintance publishd a novel here which after a run of three editions cleard about £500

Do you know any thing of the Bishop of Meath—he is a particular friend of mine and I could apply to him easily if I thought by so doing I could serve you effectually He is at present in Edinburgh and has lived a good deal in the society which I frequent & his wife is of the Moray family with some individuals of which we are intimate

These things are thrown out very much at random in hopes of starting some idea that may be [of] service Believe my dear Sir that I will feel the utmost satisfaction in being of the least service & that I am most sincerely Your faithful Servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 2 feby [PM 1813]

[*University of Texas*]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

MY DEAR SIR,—I have not been entirely inactive in your matters though my endeavours have not as yet been so efficient as I could sincerely wish I applied to my friends of the Abercorn family<sup>1</sup> for an avenue to your Lord Lieut The answer was—that they had no intimacy with the D of R but if any person succeeded as Viceroy with whom they could use such freedom they would not forget my request I shall see the Marquis & Marchioness as they pass through Scotland on their return from the “green isle” and endeavour whatever I can to further your interest I am also at Drumlanrig & have hopes of something through my noble friends of the Buccleuch family but I have had so often occasion to be troublesome to them in my own behalf and that of others that I dare not promise strongly on that head I ought to add that the Bishop of Meath spoke in very handsome terms of your character in every respect with a tincture of regret

<sup>1</sup> For Scott's application to Lady Abercorn see Vol III, pp 257-58



at your having entertained sentiments differing from those of the Church establishment <sup>1</sup> As for myself I think all Christian creeds good which convey the Christian morality in purity and do not much trouble myself about their abstract doctrines About the sermons I do not well know what to say—this is a bad time for publishing at least so the booksellers say—but I am to see Longmans partner in the course of the autumn & between them & Constable & the Ballantynes something I trust may be done I believe that all the bibliopolists would greatly prefer a novel to the sermons and I fear many readers would be of the same graceless opinion <sup>2</sup> Will you mention the size of volume &c to which the *copy* as it is technically called is likely to run

In the meanwhile I have a very particular favour to request of you which is that you would have the goodness to draw on my Agents & Booksellers Messrs John Ballan-

<sup>1</sup> In an undated letter the Bishop of Meath had written that Maturin is 'one of those much to be pited young Men to whom Nature has given talents, but not the discretion or the prudence to turn them to profit With the religious tenets he professes he cannot look for any preferment in the Church of England, nor ought he, in conscience, to seek employment in it, which he continues to do as a Curate What he says of his Father, is so far true that he lost a very respectable Employment in the Post Office, that of Clerk of one of the Roads [Clerk of the Munster Road], for an Offence [fraud] which if he believed it to be one, I am convinced nothing could have induced him to commit But it is a *trade*, without foundation, to say that their Graces and Lordships the Arch Bishops & Bishops feasted at his table, for he was not in the Rank of life, or of an Income, to feast them, or have them at his Table I know I never was within his doors He recommended this Son of his to me on his going into orders But he stayed but a very short time in a very excellent Curacy I procured for him, and, consequently, forfeited voluntarily all pretensions to my Patronage " Meath advises that Maturin should stick to his present plan of taking and coaching boarders rather than go in for periodical work " But the truth, I fear, is, that he has not steadiness to pursue any plan for any time, and I apprehend that the same may be said of his principles whether in Religion or politics —*Walpole Collection* See Scott's letter to Walter, 5th October 1820 —' He [Maturin] is a thoughtless genius however and I would not have [you] trust too much to his counsells —Vol VI, p 270 and note

<sup>2</sup> On 27th June Maturin had confessed that he knows his sermons are a drug, but the divinity will please the Calvinistic readers, and the novelty of sermons by the author of a Romance will perhaps procure more " —*Walpole Collection*

tyne & Co/ of Edinburgh for £50,, at 30 days sight I am to be strolling through the country myself and I have a good deal of money lying in their hands without any prospect of needing the small part which you mention as necessary for immediate accomodation—& the term of repayment is not of the slightest consequence to me<sup>1</sup> I trust my dear Sir you will not refuse me the satisfaction of contributing this mite towards rendering your mind easy during the summer I have known too deeply in the course of my life the distress arising from such embarrassments not to embrace with eagerness such an opportunity of alleviating them in the person of a gentleman of such talents and respectability Be so good as to address me should any thing occur that I can say in your behalf to my great friends—I mean any channel in which their interest can probably operate most advantageously for a general recommendation is a poor prospect My address is Abbotsford by Melrose & Believe me most truly yours,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 9th July 1813

[*University of Texas*]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

DEAR SIR,—On receiving your letter which was a long while on its way owing to my shifting my residence repeatedly during the last five or six weeks I wrote immediatly to Mr Ballantyne & was informd that your draught for £50 had regularly arrived & had been accepted & would of course be duly honoured They did not write you it not being usual among mercantile folks (as they inform me) unless the bill had not been to be honoured I regret that you should have had a moments uneasiness about their silence but as our friend Fluellen says the shilling is a good shilling or I will change it

<sup>1</sup> For the actual financial position of Scott at this juncture see the letters to the Ballantynes in the Appendix to our first volume and throughout that volume

I have a letter from Lady Abercorn not so hopeful as I could wish respecting the application to Lord Whitworth<sup>1</sup> in your behalf but she exhorts me to write to him myself I have not the least acquaintance with his Lordship but I will try to get some one to deliver a letter from me since the Marchioness really thinks that it may be serviceable for it is one of the few cases in which I would rather appear importunate than miss the most slender chance of success At the same time it is but proper to say that I can hardly expect any notice will be taken of my application and that I only make it in consideration of its being thought a probable measure than from any idea of my own that I am entitled to success Excuse a brief letter as I am just returned here and have a thousand things to do I am very truly Your faithful humble Servt

ABBOTSFORD, MELROSE

WALTER SCOTT

19 October [PM 1813]

[*University of Texas*]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

DEAR SIR,—A pressure of business has prevented my acknowledging until now your favour of the 27 October but did not prevent my writing to Lady Abercorn agreeably to your wishes I sincerely hope it may be of service She is friendly and generous and should it be in her power to recommend your establishment to any of her friends I trust she will not fail to do so But how far, considering their residence in England, their influence may extend among those who are likely to have pupils at Trinity<sup>2</sup> may be more doubtful At any rate it may do good & can do no harm Your employment must indeed be anything but pleasant yet if it can be put upon such

<sup>1</sup> For this see note in Vol III, p 377

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Trinity College, Dublin, some students of which Maturin is coaching

footing as to make your income comfortable and independent God knows much ought to be submitted to I was talking yesterday with a man of high rank & immense fortune about his political influence in a particular county which was supported with the greatest possible plague & trouble After all he said why should I give myself the labour of writing letters two hours every day of my life obtaining favours for the selfish and ungrateful, subjecting myself to disagreeable acquaintances & to insatiable importunity rising early & sitting up late & all to make A B a member for a particular County of Scotland I could only assure him it was positively necessary that he should take all this trouble & a great deal more to convince us that he could be as unhappy with £60000 a year & his high rank as we that labourd for our daily bread in professions or trades He laughed at my morality but the thing is excellently true for all that & when fate gets wayward with us it is no bad ground of comfort that no one is much better off than ourselves For my part I believe the very rich people are worse off than we are upon the whole for their wishes being founded altogether on caprice exclude even the pleasure of hope whereas an industrious man may always comfort himself with the reflection that independence barring hard luck is within the compass of his reasonable expectations

I have thoughts of going to London in the spring months perhaps you may in the course of the winter be able to point out some thing that may be attempted there to further your views I know or I should perhaps say *knew* Lady Castlereagh a little and should she renew our acquaintance perhaps something might be chalkd [out] In the mean while for Gods sake take care of giving further offence in matter of doctrine for although your own opinions are stuff of the conscience & not to be interfered with yet I should think no *speculative* point of religious belief ought to be imprudently brought forward Excuse this trifling hint especially as I admit myself no good

counsellor in these matters & ought not perhaps even to mention [them]—I am with best regard[s]

[*Unsigned*]

EDINR 21 Nov [PM 1813]

I will look over the poems with the greatest pleasure <sup>1</sup> & you may send them safely under cover to Francis Freling Esq General Post Office London who will frank them to me if the packet be of any ordinary bulk

[*University of Texas*]

TO RICHARD HEBER, HODNET HALL, NEAR SHREWSBURY

MY DEAR HEBER,—Has your right hand utterly forgot its cunning or have you forgotten that you never let me know the amount of my debt to you The Roxburghe books came all safe and in the most beautiful order I was only sorry the English rogue <sup>2</sup> was a castrated edition of which I should scarcely have suspected the late Duke Johns collection—but there is bawdy enough in it to satisfy any reasonable married man The romances are exquisite & I have studied them ever since at the intervals which Rokeby will permit In short I am most excessively pleased with my purchase and only want to remit you the needful please say the amount It was markd on some of the books but not on all

I was disappointed in not hearing of you when at Morritts—though indeed the general Election came with such a tumble about my ears that I could hardly have

<sup>1</sup> In his letter of 27th October Maturin had solicited one more favour—"to look over the first Book of my poetical attempt, and pronounce its doom I know you will consider this an irksome task, but indeed I am not one of the 'Genus irritabile Vatum'—repeated disappointments have destroyed my self confidence—I have been too much neglected by the world, to think there is any thing in me worth the world's notice, and I believe it would be hard for any one to think more humbly of me, than I do of myself, in spite of even *your* Condescension —*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> Item 6404 in the *Roxb Sale Cat*, p 177—"The English Rogue, by Kirkman, 4 parts, with all the plates, in 2 vol 8vo, 1672, &c" It occurs in *A L C*, p 131, with the date of 1671 4

hoped to see you being obliged to return to Scotland as Pitscottie says *upon a suddenty*<sup>1</sup> Will Scott of Raeburn my cousin german met Reginald at Harrogate & tells me he has publishd a volume of poems<sup>2</sup>—Is this so<sup>3</sup> and pray do you think you use me kindly in not sending me a copy<sup>3</sup> However to heap coals of fire on your head I shall send in a fortnight a thumping quarto calld Rokeby

I give you joy of these immense news I hope we are opening a new order of things since Boney's fund appears to be on the verge of leaving him<sup>3</sup> Ever yours most truly

W SCOTT

CASTLE STREET EDINBURGH

19 December 1813

[Cholmondeley]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

MY DEAR SIR,—Your play arrived here safe but I only have had it in my possession about ten days being just returnd from a long pleasure voyage in which by the bye I visited your Giants Causeway which is a superb piece of scenery I got your letter yesterday (mis-addressd Castle-hill<sup>4</sup> for Castle Street which occasiond temporary miscarriage) & I hasten to give you the best opinion I have been able to form of the play—In general I like it very much indeed and so does a friend of superior taste to whom I read it The character of Bertram is highly dramatic well-got up and maintaind with a Satanic dignity which

<sup>1</sup> i.e. all of a sudden It is not likely that he [Butler] should have joined them [the rioters] on a suddenty —*The Heart of Midlothian*, Border Ed., I, chap. xviii, p. 269

<sup>2</sup> *Poems and Translations* (1812)

<sup>3</sup> Referring to the National Debt in France “In 1812 there was a deficit of 95,000,000 francs in 1813 one of 175,000,000 francs”—*Camb. Mod. Hist.*, II, p. 119

<sup>4</sup> Most of Maturin's letters to Scott are thus misaddressd The play he has sent is *Bertram* On 29th May Scott had asked to see it on the slender chance of my getting Kemble to review it —*University of Texas* There is further correspondence on the subject from the same source

is often truly sublime—the Lady Imogene may be also considered as a master-piece and the language throughout is beautiful even to redundancy. In short I think if represented by adequate performers the piece cannot fail of success. As I was not aware you had spoken to the Dublin Manager it was my purpose to have sent it to John Kemble who perhaps for the sake of playing Bertram (which he would do imitably) might have contrived to get it on the English stage. But I find he is now in France & the time of his return uncertain. So that I will return the Manuscript through Mr Freling & now state (the more unpleasing duty of a friend) what as an indifferent judge of dramatic poetry I consider to be the defects of the piece. As a general remark I have observed that the language is somewhat redundant—not that I would wish it retrenched for the press—but upon the stage there is an impatience in the English audience for bustle & action which will not endure anything to be said or done that has not some immediate effect upon the progress of the piece. I observe you have already marked many passages I presume for retrenchment & like a good pruner (a labour with which I am at present busied) I would leave no luxuriance however beautiful which tends to weaken the main growth of the tree. All may be & should be restored when the play is printed—I do not well know *what* to say about the Black Knight—it is at once a grand & terribly bold attempt to introduce upon the stage an agent of this nature & I wish your idea may be perfectly understood by the audience. Should they misconceive his nature or take it into their head that circumstances were not sufficiently explained respecting him it would have a bad effect upon the piece. A judicious manager will understand this better than any one for it is not easy to calculate excepting by experience how far the intelligence of an audience can be trusted, being as the multitude must always be, of rather obtuse perceptions in general & labouring under the disadvantage of picking up all their information from

the dialogue upon the stage often imperfectly heard and misapprehended If you can bring out the same effect upon the stage as in the closet I think the effect will be prodigious

My last criticism is of a more decided cast & I intreat your particular attention to it The incidents in the V act beautifully conceived & versified will nevertheless have some chance of being heavy on the stage because the murder of Aldobrand being once committed the catastrophe of the criminal lovers should be hurried forward with much greater rapidity and combination I am the more [obstinate ?] in this faith because I *know* [?] both from Mrs Siddons & John Kemble that great part of the failure of De Montfort arose from the interest languishing after the death of Rezenvelt When the audience knows that the crime has been committed & the punishment is impending they are impatient of delay and exact a rapid & simultaneous movement of all the branches of the plot to its final completion I wish you would talk over this with some sensible performer or with your manager & should he be of my opinion I would not hesitate to compress & remodel the two last acts <sup>1</sup>—the piece is long upon the whole and would bear such abridgement as might be necessary in so far as the watch is the critic These are my observations upon a piece which I admire exceedingly and which does great credit to the

<sup>1</sup> In Maturin's reply of 15th October he agrees about the proposed corrections and retrenchments 'with the exception of altering the structure of the last two acts, which after many attempts I found impossible, without the risk of even grosser defects' He hears that Kemble has returned from France so that if he is likely to accept the play, Maturin will send it back He hopes a London production would mean greater profit 'Horrid actual want is staring me in the Face' He is now unable to get employment as teacher and has been unsuccessful in an attempt to start a day-school 'I cannot complain of persecution or opposition I have no Enemies, but I have no friends—in a word I have no *interest*, and unexceptionable character and acknowledged academical talent are feeble aids against it Let any of Scott's distinguished benefactors show their favourable intentions before it is too late I fear the Hour in which the Heart of Man is tried above any other, the Hour in which your children ask you for Food, and you have no answer'—*Walpole Collection*



richness of your imagination & the power of expression you have employd—in fact you are in the happy predicament of needing only the pruning knife—I will be much honoured by standing Godfather to Bertram & accept the compliment willingly I have used the ungracious freedom to draw a circumflex round four words the omission of three of which will perhaps simplify the in[s]cription & for the wind only I trust you will soon possess better & more efficient though not more sincere friends than yours truly

W S

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE N B

8 Octr 1814

{ If I can be of any further  
use about the play pray let  
me know sans ceremonie

[*University of Texas*]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

DFAR SIR,—I have the pleasure to return the MS under Mr Freling's cover Since writing to you I read it over again with a very judicious friend to whose taste and judgement I am much in the habit of deferring We are both delighted with the depth of imagination and eloquent power of passion which the piece exhibits and join in conjuring you to give particular attention for the purpose of insuring the reception to which it is so well entitled My friend demurs somewhat to the criminal intercourse taking place during the course of action but I do not join him in this objection On the French stage it would be held weighty but we have professd hitherto to hold the poet entitled to use all means to excite pity and terror which are not offensive to real delicacy a very different principle from the humourous phantasm which the French have set up in its stead But I thought it right to mention the criticism Those on which we agree refer 1st to the diabolical agency which we fear there might be difficulty in making fully intelligible to the audience &

then to the diffuse nature of the catastrophe in which there is too much shifting of scenes and action from one place & person to another. The scenes are also rather long and on the stage in a fifth act would seem to the audience to *hang fire*. You should really try to assemble your persons towards the conclusion & precipitate the whole catastrophe a good deal. We specially object to the death of the child as an unnecessary horror in a piece where there are three deaths beside Cleone which concludes with a similar scene was never popular. At the same time whatever alterations you may make in the conduct of the piece I should like to have it all preserved as originally written. I hope you have a tolerable set <sup>1</sup> in Dublin. You are so much weaker by the loss of my friend Miss Smith who had very considerable powers.

For heavens sake do bestow some pains upon this piece which when its artificial combinations are made to correspond with its real merit will succeed triumphantly. But I would leave nothing to chance. The author of a successful play would be a very great man just now for we have had few worthy notice. If you would like better to try London I would endeavour to get at some of the managers for you but they are a troublesome set to deal with <sup>2</sup>. Yours very truly

[Unsigned]

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE

9 October 1814

[University of Texas]

<sup>1</sup> i.e. set of actors. For Sarah Smith, the actress, who married George Bartley this year, see Vol. I, p. 372 and note.

In an undated and hurriedly finished letter Scott reports that he has written to Kemble and that Maturin can send the play by way of Freling, but Kemble 'is no manager and an application to him is somewhat like the ladder pland by Lord Bowling to the Board of Admiralty'. Then on 10th December Scott writes briefly to say that, on hearing from him, he has sent the MS. to Kemble, who is to be very soon in Dublin, where Maturin, as Scott has mentioned to Kemble, will call upon him. — *University of Texas*. 'Cleone' is a tragedy, by Robert Dodsley, first performed at Covent Garden on 2nd December 1758.

TO RICHARD HEBER, FAVOURED BY MR DUNLOP,  
ADVOCATE, 70 PALL MALL

DEAR HEBER,—Mr Dunlop<sup>1</sup> the bearer, author of the History of Fiction is desirous of the advantage of being known to you You will find him a very well informd & gentlemanlike young man I intend to be in Londn in about three weeks My Wife comes with me & a great girl whom you remember mewling & puking in the nurses arms I trust you will be in town I am very sorry to hear how ill poor Ellis has been I am ever truly Yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 11 March 1815

[Cholmondeley]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

DEAR SIR,—I have been for some time in London where I had very little leisure for writing which must be my apology for not answering a letter of yours long due in which you mentiond publishing your poems It will give me great pleasure if you can do so with the chance of their meeting the reception to which the genius of the author well entitles them and I will be happy to do any thing in my power to assist their entree But a late occurrence,

<sup>1</sup> This is John Dunlop (d 1842), admitted advocate in 1807 The first edition of his *History of Fiction* was published in 1814 A second edition came out in 1816, in which year Dunlop wrote to Scott, returning, among other books, a work 'which is rather impudently styled Shakespeare's Jest book, & which I do not think has the smallest pretensions to be considered as the 'Hundred merry tales' alluded to in *Much Ado About Nothing*' He also sends the new edition of *The History of Fiction*, which he hopes Scott will approve of more than the former one '& to the improvement of which your kindness has so essentially contributed'—*Walpole Collection* In the Advertisement to this edition, dated "Edinburgh, 10th Feb 1816," Dunlop expresses his obligations to those by whom mv researches have been facilitated The names of Mr Scott, Mr Douce, and Mr Heber, need only be mentioned —p xxi On the same date as the above letter Scott introduces Dunlop to Douce in the same strain, adding that the young man is 'enthusiastic in those pursuits to which you are attached'—*Bodleian Quarterly Record*, vol vii, No 75 (1932), p 100

namely the nomination of Lord Byron to be one of the Committee of management of Drury Lane Theatre, induces me to wish you would again look to the drama<sup>1</sup> Lord Byron's chief wish in assuming this troublesome & irksome duty is I sincerely believe to assist literary merit He spoke to me before I left London which was five days since requesting me to mention any person whom I thought capable of bringing forward a good play<sup>2</sup> I mentiond the performance which Kemble rejected & its history & I think if it could be now brought on with some attention to the criticisms which I ventured to offer Lord Byron might probably give it a trial at Drury Lane If you think it worth trying you have only to send the Manuscript to his Lordship Piccadilly London & I am sure if you refer to the contents of this letter he will give it a careful perusal As I am about to set out upon another journey I think you had better write & send the packet to Lord Byron directly I have put him in possession of such parts of your story as I am sure will interest him in your behalf & I am with great regard Dear Sir Your faithful humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 15 June 1815

[University of Texas]

TO RICHARD HEBER, PIMLICO, WESTMINSTER

MY DEAR HEBER,—I was most agreeably surprized by the receipt of the very handsome edition of *Caltha*<sup>3</sup> and

<sup>1</sup> Since their last communications, Maturin, as he had reported on 16th March, has seen Kemble There are "insuperable objections" to producing the play Maturin now thinks of printing it along with a poem—*Walpole Collection* Through Byron's influence it was eventually produced at Drury Lane on 9th May 1816 See Vol IV, p 162 and note 1

<sup>2</sup> See Lockhart, c xxxiv, and Moore's *Lord Byron* (1830), vol 1 pp 614 9 for Scott's frequent meetings with Byron during his visit to London from 17th April to 11th June Our Vol III, pp 42 69 For their last meeting on 13th September of this year see later letter, p 424, and *Journal*, 1, p 59

<sup>3</sup> *Caltha Poetarum or, the Bumble Bee* By T Cutwode [A reprint of the edition of 1599 Edited by R Heber], 4to, London, 1815 A Roxburghe Club publication See *ALC* pp 185, 274

feel a foot higher by the dedication which will place me high among future collectors The prodigious fowl hums & buzzes with great success in his new dress and will do his editor great credit I hope you had my letter by my unfortunate scribe & have set him to work

This good news has drawn such a humming & buzzing into my brain that I cannot rest but intend forthwith setting out from Brussels to Paris What do you say to meet me there & let us drink success to the Lily while the Grenadiers march is beating in the streets of Paris Pray think of this like a good fellow I set out upon the 25th<sup>1</sup> or thereby Ever yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 14 July [1815]

[*Cholmondeley*]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN, CARE OF  
MR MURRAY, ALBEMARIE STREET, LONDON

DEAR SIR,—Some family distress and necessary business consequent upon it has caused me [to] delay my very warm and sincere *Gratulator* upon your splendid success There are few people to whom it gives more pleasure than to me for I am alike gratified as a friend and as a successful prophet I own I have always been of opinion that when an actor could be found capable of expressing a character of passion and an author capable of writing one the public would not prove so totally debauched & brutified by Melodrames and mumming as not to receive it with acclamation And certainly nothing could be deeper & more affecting than the source of fear & terror which you have unlocked in *Bertram* It is perhaps very incongruous but although I believe I was the first strongly to remonstrate against the actual introduction of the Black Knight upon the stage yet I am very desirous of preserving that

<sup>1</sup> As a fact on the 28th See note to letter to Charlotte, 3rd August 1815, p 134

very curious & striking part of the drama as it originally stood If you will indulge me with your *prima cura* I will have the scenes copied out & interleaved with my copy of Bertram <sup>1</sup>

I find by a letter from Murray that you are immediately in London where this is like to find you When you think of returning ought you not to take Scotland in your way We are vain enough to think it is worth looking at & well informd enough to be desirous of seeing the new Eschylus—About six weeks hence you will find me on Tweedside nursing oaks the future hope of navies now about six & thirty inches high Till that time I must be resident in this town owing to the sitting of our courts But here or among my heaths I would be equally happy to have an opportunity of making your personal acquaintance—Your novels will be now reprinted instantly I should suppose and people will see the merit to which they shut their eyes formerly As one of the first who did homage to your genius while yet in the shade I am truly Your very faithful Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 29 May 1816

[University of Texas]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN,  
YORK STREET, DUBLIN

MY DEAR SIR,—I received your letter on my return from a short trip to the Highlands and am prodigiously delighted with the possession of the *unlop'd* copy of the tragedy of Bertram The attempt to prune a poets luxuriancies is often like the cropping Sampsons hair the means of depriving him of his strength—and although I like the printed play very much yet I alway[s] missd the dark mysterious machinery of the black Knight whose influence and agency gave to the atrocities of Bertram an appear-

<sup>1</sup> *Bertram, a Tragedy* The original Autograph MS of the author, with his letter of presentation Dublin, 1816—A L C, p 208

would enhance the pathos of the next tragedy & set whole corps of Yeomanry weeping What think you of draining a bog which instead of proving as soft as the fair Molly Mogg<sup>1</sup> has turned hard-hearted so that we are driving our drain through solid rock which we are forced to blast with gunpowder—*perditur inter hæc*—I will not add *misero* for country sports & country employments are always my most pleasing avocations If this letter be dull impute it to the heavy rain which is falling around me in pails full enough to damp the fire of Pindar himself Yours

ABBOTSFORD 22 July [PM 1816]

[Unsigned]

[University of Texas]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

MY DEAR SIR,—Nothing could be more gratifying to me than your inscription of Manuel<sup>2</sup> which in my opinion equals at least if it does not exceed the tragedy of Bertram At any rate the interest though deep powerful and terrible does not leave the same harrowing and unpleasing impression on the mind which accompanies the seduction of the heroine in its predecessor It differs as the effect of a pure bitter is more agreeable to the palate than that in which there is some relish of Sweet If you think this silly simile smells of the pharmacopeia I must inform you that for the first time in my life I have been in the Doctors hands for this fortnight past A foolish inflammation in the stomach which by the way interrupted some beautiful harp music from your friend Mr Pole<sup>3</sup> & broke up a little

<sup>1</sup> See Vol IV, p 250 and note

<sup>2</sup> 'I am transcribing my new tragedy for you,' Maturin had written on 8th January, "which if it does not melt all hearts, will certainly dazzle all eyes, for it is the grandest melodrama that ever was acted, whatever be its other demerits—it is all in vain to write good poetry for the stage I put my faith in carpenters and painters defying Melpomene and all her works

I hope you will condescend to stand sponsor to my present literary brat—do not be offended with the dedicatory motto, 'prima dicte mihi summa dicende Camæna'—*Walpole Collection* The new tragedy" is *Manuel* (1817) See *ALC* p 212

<sup>3</sup> See *Journal*, 22nd January 1826, and Vol X, p 408 and note 1

party with most admired disorder sent me howling to my bed & from thence had nearly transferd me to the list of bards that have been But the Doctors stood to their tackle and saved breath & being at the expence of flesh & blood for they employd the lancet & blisters without mercy But I am now getting sound again & able to applaud the triumph to which you have joind me I rather suspect

Non semel dicemus Io Triumpho

and that you will prosecute the honourable path which you first of living poets have anew opened to distinction I do not know whether I am blinded by a godfathers partiality for this last production but it seems to be [me] that your stile in losing some flowers has become more forcibly dramatic and that you have studied more the severe and dignified tone of passion than of ornamental elocution

10 April [1817]

My eyes which are still a little weak and some disposition to giddiness have interrupted this scrawl for about a fortnight & given me time to receive and acknowledge your last letter of the 27th from which I see with much pain that Manuel has not kept the ground which in the estimation of the best judges it was well entitled to do <sup>1</sup> I do not think this ought to intermit your dramatic efforts though perhaps it may induce you to postpone anything of the kind for the present Among our list of dramatic authors that is of those of whom we know anything there is scarce one who has not written unsuccessful pieces nor

<sup>1</sup> Maturin replies on 19th April that the form of *Manuel* now made public is a mere pantomime compared with the original version He will send the MS, "and I think you will perceive some difference between it and the garbled, mangled, incoherent, unintelligible melange without unity of narrative or consistency of dialogue which in spite of my remonstrances and even intreaties they have produced to the public" He will lose no time in applying to Murray "I shall put my novel under your auspices it is wholly unlike any thing I ever attempted before I have a tragedy on the stocks I do not date from a jail yet, and that is a comfort, and—a miracle Since your musical friend has had the goodness to give my airy nothings a local habitation, I shall be most happy to continue a Contributor to his collection"—*Walpole Collection*



can it be wonderd at when the whimsicality of the public taste and that taste expressd by the confused and noisy crowd of a theatrical audience come to be considerd For my part I have so utter a dislike to the profanum vulgus whom by cour[te]sy we call a generous public that between the two productions I esteem myself more honord in having my name connected with that which had not the acceptance of their most sweet voices I let what I have previously written on this subject stand because I wish you to be aware of my first sentiments written at a moment when certainly few things could give me pleasure and when the perusal of Manuel nevertheless gave me a great deal

With respect to translation it is poor and ill-paid work Translations of the classics sell slowly because people are shy of acknowleging that they do not understand the original and the French language is so generally understood among the reading circles that the booksellers care not how indifferently translations are made from it not supposing that any one will read it who can judge of stile I understand about a guinea a sheet (printed) is the highest price given and that will hardly pay the trouble of writing the manuscript I would strongly recommend in your situation that you should try the reviewing which is very liberally paid I am sure John Murray would be happy of your aid to give a literary article for the Quarterly & I know no literary labour better recompensed considering how little trouble it gives a well-informd man You have the choice of your own subject & of your own mode of treating it and the *honorarium* is £10,, 10,, per sheet I think if you mention this to Murray you will find no difficulty in getting engaged in the cause of criticism At least God knows they often seem to need such assistance as you could give them with very little trouble to yourself You have a name besides & that is a great deal One word only from your northern Mentor They are zealous high-church folks & therefore you should not take a

controversial article I spoke to Constable about translation & he gives me no encouragement to say much of it A Novel I could dispose of for you to considerable advantage if my reviewing plan likes you not Ever my dear Sir Yours most faithfully & sincerely, WALTER SCOTT

Kean is here just now driving the world before him Campbell<sup>1</sup> has just sent me the inclosed Dont bother yourself with my eccentric friend more than you find convenient He may be apt to overwork [?]

[*March-April 1817*]

[*University of Texas*]

TO THE REV D CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN

MY DEAR SIR,—I trouble you with a few lines to say that I have in consequence of your favour spoken to Constable our great Scotch publisher who readily undertakes to print & publish your novel<sup>2</sup> giving his bill for a certain sum of money as the price of the first edition & so much more on every subsequent edition which I hold to be the fairest mode of settlement between bookseller & author What that certain sum is to be must depend on

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Campbell, who collected *Albyn's Anthology, etc* (1816 18) See Vol IV, pp 199 and note, 259-60 and note 3 On 25th December [1816] Scott had passed on to Maturin a request from Campbell 'A certain mad highlander, parcel poet parcel musician and entitled in both capacities to be very pertinacious insists as appears from the inclosed that I should plague you with words for some of his tunes' He says that Campbell is "a most enthusiastic admirer of yours and a very worthy man to boot"—*University of Texas* On 8th January 1817 Maturin replies that he will assist Campbell, but "I had rather write as much blank verse as the Man that translated the Eneis line for line, than one single sonnet or ditty to my own Mistress's Eyebrow, or any one else's"—*Walpole Collection*

<sup>2</sup> The "novel" is *Women, or Pour et Contre* (1818) See Vol IV, pp 480 81, Vol V, pp 95 and note 1, 502 3 and note On 13th May Maturin says that Constable's terms are beyond what he anticipated He is writing another tragedy in spite of the "formidable intelligence" that Byron prepares a drama "whose weight of metal is enough to blow my frigate out of the water I am most happy that P[ole]'s conduct is satisfactory—how few poets are musical—Southey is said to be as deaf to it as Johnson was—Lord B never mentions it—no proof of his liking it The Scotch and Irish are all fond of it"—*Walpole Collection*

the size of the work the sale-price expence of printing & paper & many other things which can only be settled when I get the manuscript which I beg you will send (or at least a volume) in the course of the two next months if possible for after the 12 July our courts rise and I shall leave Edinburgh which will make it more difficult for me to treat with Constable on your part as verbal conferences answer much the best on these occasions I will endeavour to get the best terms for you I can but will close nothing without advising you He stipulates that the title page shall bear "by the Author of the House of Montorio" to which I suppose you have no objection He also desires to print & publish in Edinburgh & I will endeavour to take care that it is accurately executed At least you have no castrations to fear on the present occasion I will be delighted to have the MS of the tragedy to bind up with that of Bertram By the way I saw Kean act Bertram very finely indeed before I left Edinr Mrs Harry Siddons who is a great friend of mine and a most excellent person as well as a charming actress electrified a very crouded audience as Imogine

I have to thank you for introducing me to Mr Pole who is certainly the best harp-performer and the most attentive teacher I have ever seen I forget if I told you he is teaching my two girls & I expect to find them much improved on my return to Edinburgh on Monday next I have been at this cottage endeavouring to get clear of an ugly pain in my chest the reliques of my late indisposition & flatter myself I have succeeded though I am not half the man I was & a cold hail-blast things which sometimes visit us in the same Scotland makes me fold the plaidd over my breast as tight as an old woman going to market Well or ill Believe me my dear Sir very truly yours

ABBOTSFORD 6 May 1817<sup>1</sup>

WALTER SCOTT

[*University of Texas*]

<sup>1</sup> For the important letter to Maturin of 26th February 1818, which should come in between this and the next letter printed here, see Vol V, pp 95 8

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN, MAIN STREET,  
WEXFORD

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been absent from home several weeks which occasioned some delay in receiving Mr Croleys poem <sup>1</sup> You had taught me to expect much both by your own praise & by mentioning Mr Croley as author of the poem on Paris which I read with such peculiar interest last year My expectations however though thus excited have been amply fullfilled I think Mr C has contrived to treat a subject which from its comprehensive and important nature was peculiarly difficult with very much grace and feeling The interest arising out of great events is in general so great that it renders [them] improper subjects for the decorations of poetry—ornament and the arts of invention seem out of place and the mind of the reader before he peruses the first line is filled with these feelings which the perusal ought to have excited and cannot easily augment But when the same event is removed to a certain distance of time it becomes a new subject for poetry and the tones of Mr Croleys harp sound like those notes of music which recall the scenery and sensations with which our imagination has associated with them I am much pleased with the tone of expression and feeling which goes through the poem & on the whole have not been more gratified by anything this long & many a day Where the merited success of Byron & Wordsworth has set every one on imitating a manner which is only graceful where it is original I am peculiarly pleased with hearing a poem of the old & excellent English school Pray make my grateful thanks to Mr C for his very acceptable present and the pleasure it has afforded me

I have been chiefly at Drumlanrick Castle & Rokeby since I left my own dwelling which is at present occupied [by] work-people who resemble those of Solomon as little in the silence of their operations as he who employs them

<sup>1</sup> *Lines on the Death of Her Royal Highness the Princess Charlotte* (1818) For George Croly see Vol VI, p 40 and note 2

approaches to that sage monarch in the wisdom which made the plan

I hear with pleasure you think of a new drama and also of a romance Probably the first will fetch you to London in which case I hope you will take Scotland on your return It is but putting yourself on board a smack & when at Leith you are nearer Dublin than at London if you chuse to return by Port Patrick The word *smack* reminds me of a ridiculous enough equivoke which occurr'd in an order from Constables shopman to the printer on the subject of your novel It ran thus—<sup>1</sup>

“Our Mr C is utterly impatient for ‘Women’ Please send him two in sheets for private use Balfour<sup>1</sup> is ready to stock five hundred and as many more as can be forwarded 500 ‘Women’ must also be got ready for the smacks next week & as many sent to Balfour to be boarded for our own use”

By the way the said Constables partner has been with me & says your sermons<sup>2</sup> will be out immediatly He showd me a passage in the preface which he said (truly I hope) that you wishd me to look at it Frankly I do not like it for several reasons In the first place the public will with their usual malignity set down your complaint to disappointment and no man would willingly be said or supposed to harbour such a motive for censuring the establishment he belongs to 2dly The same complaint applies to all professions and to regret that some are raised to undeserved wealth and eminence while others more meritorious are left in comparative indigence is to regret that the worthiest & best man who holds a lottery ticket does not get the £20,000 prize Lastly I hope before I die to see you a good jolly Dean or something better and there is no need to publish a diatribe which you may in that case be sorry for All this I submit to you without

<sup>1</sup> *The Edinr P O Directory* for 1816 17 gives Balfour, Elphinston, book seller, 6 Union street ”

<sup>2</sup> *Sermons* (1819), in which there is no preface

disputing one of your positions They are all very true but the truth is of that kind which need not be spoken Excuse this paragraph which Cadell has led me to write I hope not hors de propos for next to receiving criticism the idea of intruding it upon a friend like you is the most unpleasant thing in the world

Adieu my dear Sir Go on and prosper & believe me most truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 17 *Sept*r [PM 1818]

[*University of Texas*]

TO THE REVD CHARLES ROBERT MATURIN,  
YORK STREET, DUBLIN

MY DEAR SIR,—Your very interestin[g] volumes arrived safe and gave me high pleasure in the perusal—there is in the *Albigenses*<sup>1</sup> as in all you write the strongest traces of the *vis poetica* enough to make the stock in trade of a dozen of modern rhymers The reader may also if he pleases acquire much knowlege while enjoying much pleasure The characters are drawn with great force & spirit—a little exaggerated perhaps—but not more so than is pardonable when we look back upon ancient days and form our calculations of mortality upon the heroic scale

I am very glad you think of Scotland Our springs are cold but I hope you will not find your reception so Whether I am at Edinr or here (which is saying in effect whether duty or inclination claim to regulate my motions) I will be equally happy to see you being with much regard Dear Sir Very much yours

[*Unsigned*]

ABBOTSFORD 18 *feby* [PM 1824]

[*University of Texas*]

<sup>1</sup> In four volumes (1824)—“it was intended to be but the first series of a great trilogy”—Idman, *Maturin*, p 283

TO MRS MATHURIN <sup>1</sup>

DEAR MADAM,—I beg to return to you under Mr Frelings cover the Manuscript account of my late friends family drawn up by himself It is very interesting and cannot but serve as a most excellent introduction to the very spirited and ingenious sketch of his character which I also return But there is a gap left betwixt these two pieces which the public will desire to see filld up They will wish to know the time and place of Mr Mathurines birth and education the circumstances of his life and the order of his different publications so as to give the memoir the necessary degree of accuracy & authenticity It is by no means necessary to violate the privacy of domestic history by going into those particulars which could in the slightest degree affect the feelings of survivors but the privacy of men of genius cannot be total the world will break in upon them and insist that its curiosity shall be gratified I was in hope to have aided this part of the narrative by a letter which began my acquaintance with Mr Mathurine—it was written from his understanding that I had reviewd his House of Montorio in the Quarterly Revw <sup>2</sup> He gave me in that or an immediatly succeeding letter a very interesting account of his education and of the circumstances which occasioned him to despair of attaining church preferment I have sought everywhere for that letter but cannot light upon it I remember shewing it to the late Dr O' Beirne, Bishop of Meath in hopes something might be done in the Church for Mr Mathurine but what is now become of it I cannot tell Perhaps I may yet recover this interesting document

<sup>1</sup> Henrietta Kingsbury, sister of Rev Thomas Kingsbury, Archdeacon of Killala Maturin had married her in 1805 She was a beautiful and talented woman, and, a pupil of Madame Catalini, one of the best singers in Dublin It is a tradition that, to her grandfather Swift spoke his last words before his death See Idman, *op cit*, p 10 For the above proposed publication of Maturin's literary remains see Vol IX, p 221 and note He died in 1824

See letter to Maturin, 28th December 1812, and notes, pp 338-9

Mr Mathurines other letters to me chiefly relate to circumstances not very fit for publication

I send you Sir Robert Steeles very interesting letters with his inclosed permission to do with them as you think fit <sup>1</sup> Those of Mr Mathurine are like all he wrote full of beauty of expression

I had some conversation with Mr Constable on the subject of Mr Mathurines works and I find he would be very ready to permit any of them that are his property to be publishd for the benefit of the family probably other gentlemen of the trade might be equally liberal and if a selection should be made of several volumes a subscription would be much more available for such a work than for the biographical sketch by itself I do not know to whom Mr Mathurines other novels belong if to Messrs Longman & Co I have no doubt of their liberality They might without much expence be printed in a handsome and popular shape and would be found to contain as much poetry in the form of prose as any other number of volumes in the English or any other language I was reading over *Women* the other day and while I can conceive some reasons which may have stood in the way of its popularity I am really astonishd to think that its success was not more universally distinguishd The vacillating character of

<sup>1</sup> From "Beaminster House [Dorset]" on 14th March Sir Robert Steele had written to say that by Mrs Maturin's desire he sends Scott some letters which passed between Maturin and himself They are submitted "for your *free* use, either publish or suppress them or any part of them" On 19th April, after thanking Scott for his kind offer, Mrs Maturin informs him that her late husband "often felt he was deceived by his Booksellers, and I much fear I should have little chance of success with them," so that it might be better to dispose of the work at once for a certain sum What portion of Maturin's works would Scott recommend for republication? "If poor Mr Maturin had lived your visit to Dublin would have afforded him indeed the sincerest gratification—the weak state of his health alone prevented his going to Edinburgh last year" She encloses a brief account of Maturin she has received from his mother (Fidelia Watson before her marriage, see Idman, *op cit*, p 5) "As you appear to think it injudicious to lay domestic circumstances before the public, would it not be advisable to remove 'the very strong passages in the Memoir and Sir R Steele's correspondence'?" She appends a list of Maturin's works with publishers names and dates — *Walpole Collection*



the Heroe though certainly in nature and the natural dislike of general readers to an unhappy termination may have been obstacles If I had a list of Mr Mathurines novels with the publishers names I would willingly endeavour to make some sort of critical preface or introduction But there are many which I have not seen for a long time Some perhaps I may never have seen at all

There is some chance of my seeing Dublin this summer if my sons regiment should come thither He is lately married and I would wish to see his establishment It grieves me to think that I shall not see Mr M but so changes the world Last year he wrote to me he was coming to Edinr now I am going to Ireland yet we shall meet in neither case Adieu Dear Madam & excuse my detaining the papers so long I wishd to make search both in Edinr & here for the letter which is amissing I am most respectfully Dear Mrs Mathurine your most obedt humble Servt

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 9 *April* 1825

[*University of Texas*]

TO MRS MATHURIN

DEAR MRS MATHURINE,—Many things have happend since I had the pleasure of seeing you which put it out of my power to be of the service to you which at that time I thought I might have been The ruin of two great book-selling houses in London and Edinburgh at once deprived me of a great part of my hard earnd fortune and prevented me from having it in my power to get Mr Mathurines novels publishd as we then propose[d] So on that point I am the Magician with his wand broken

Lord Plunkets short stay in this country prevented my finding any opportunity of reminding him of the hopes

which he held out in your sons<sup>1</sup> future. It would have required some delicacy to do [so] in the confusion of inns and outs and the breaking up of private friendships which attend great political changes. I have no connexion or correspondence with Lord Plunket excepting having received his hospitality<sup>a</sup> during my short Irish tour; it would not therefore be quite easy for me to introduce myself once more for the purpose of claiming a favour which has escaped his memory in the multiplicity of his affairs. I think however if you could get any friends to mention your sons name Lord Plunket would attend to the circumstances for I recollect he expressed himself obliged to the late Mr Mathurine for some exertions made in his favour at the Trinity election.

I am totally unacquainted with theatrical people and theatrical affairs and I have not even seen the play which you wish me to recommend. I apprehend before I even do so I ought to be satisfied in my own mind that it has a *strong probability* of success because though it is impossible that Mr Mathurine could write any thing which had not high poetical merit the success of a piece depends upon the conduct of the plot and many other circumstances totally unconnected with the authors genius. I would willingly undertake to look the manuscript over and do what I can to recommend it to the managers of one or the other of the theatres but this is always on the supposi-

<sup>1</sup> William Basil Maturin (1807-1887), who became a clergyman. From "Chapel Izod, Knocktopher, County Kilkenny," he had informed Scott on 26th December 1825 that, after having been mislaid at the London theatres, the MS. of his father's last tragedy has been recovered, and he would like advice as to its disposal. At present he himself has accepted the situation of a country tutor—*Walpole Collection*. Maturin's last tragedy was *The Siege of Salerno*. "It is, in conception, not unlike Byron's *Siege of Corinth*," and abounds in passages of great power and beauty.—*Irish Quarterly Review*, vol. II (1852), p. 166. "It is generally maintained that Maturin's unpublished manuscripts and his correspondence were destroyed by his son, who disapproved of his father's connection with the stage. This story has, as far as I know, never been definitely proved"—Idman, *Maturin*, p. 322, note 27.

At Wicklow. See Vol. IX, pp. 189 with note, 202.

tion that I think it likely to excite public attention I must own however that an active agent upon the spot is likely to be of much greater use than I can be knowing nothing about the Managers not even the names of those who hold the situation All I could be expected to obtain might be the inducing them to treat the application with attention & this I would from respect to Mr Maturines memory and a wish to assist his family as much as is in my power certainly attempt to do though without much hope of any success I am dear Mrs Mathurine very much your obedt Servt

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 20 *Augt* [1826]

[*University of Texas*]



## MISCELLANEOUS LETTERS

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*mainly letters which arrived too late to appear in the proper year  
including some last hour arrivals*



1797-1831

TO ALEXANDER BOSWELL <sup>1</sup>

EDINR 30 *June* 1797

DEAR SIR,—I have very many & most sincere thanks to return you for the German poems with which you have favoured me and still more for the English Translations of “Freut euch des lebens” To me & I have the Vanity to say “Ed Io son pittore,” nothing appears more difficult than to preserve the simplicity of the German without deviating into weakness, or its strength without bordering upon Bombast I need only add that my surprise and satisfaction is the more strong when I find a Translation from that language preserve both the force and unaffected ease of the Original I have not yet, maugre your encouragement, attempted the German Tobacco pipe which in the original I admire most sincerely I think had Corporal Trim been a German, he must according to your account of their manners have made his oath rather by the ivory and ebony tobacco pipe than by the Montero Cap of his poor Brother Tom <sup>2</sup>

Apropos of the Doughty Corporal our Inspection with regard to our progress in discipline on Tuesday last went very well off, all things considerd, & I have reason to know that Sir James Stewart *really felt* what he very politely expressd great satisfaction at our proficiency I hope we shall have you in winter

I shall expect with as much impatience as is consistent with decency (perhaps a little more) your further com-

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol VII, p 112 and note

See Sterne, *Tristram Shandy*, Book vi, chap xxiv

munications and if you are fond of the Ballads & Minstrel Ditties of this Island I flatter myself I can in some slight degree afford you a similar gratification for I have been long a Black letter Scholar & yet longer a collector of the poetical commemorations of our Border wars

I am a very idle mortal during the long vacation and therefore need not add how happy I am to hear from any of my friends Perhaps you will hardly allow me upon so short an acquaintance to rank you in that number Permit me however to use the privilege of a brother in arms in subscribing myself Dear Sir Yours most faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

[*Yale Univ Lib*]

To [GEORGE HENRY HUTTON]<sup>1</sup>

[facsimile]

DEAR SIR,—It is very long since I heard from you but as I am myself a very lazy correspondent I have no right to complain of the silence of others But I confess myself too much interested in our national antiquities to be indifferent as to the progress of your work which must throw great light on our Church History I have at present in my possession three papal Bulls in the years 1219 1233 & 1265 conferring certain privileges upon the Abbacy of Paisley which I think may be of some service

<sup>1</sup> George Henry Hutton (*d* 1827), the archaeologist As long ago as 3rd November 1800 Hutton had written from Peebles to say he is composing a work on Religious Houses and Monasteries of Scotland Professor Stewart has referred him to Scott On 10th November he expressed a wish to get at the Chartulary of Dryburgh as it contains much about the disputes between the Abbots and their neighbours the Haliburtons, also the Buccleugh papers, as that family are presumably to be classed among the benefactors of the Peebles Monastery He continues the subject on 27th November, mentioning, among others, "the Fairneyhirst papers" Then, on 20th March 1802 he advises Scott he has given to Mr Dumergue "the collection of old papers which you were so kind as to permit me to bring from Edinburgh early last year"—*Walpole Collection* This is the General Hutton introduced into note in Vol XI, pp 295 96 His collection of early ecclesiastical documents, now in the Nat Lib Scot, were gathered with a view to compiling a *Monasticon Scotiae* See *DNB*



to you if you will let me know how an accurate transcript can be transmitted to you I will cause such to be made out under my own eye I hope you will take care of the Charters I lent you, being old family papers I should be sorry that they were mislaid I hope you will make us a visit in Scotland one of these days that we may talk over our mutual pursuits You will probably have observed that my Border poems are publishd I shall be happy to learn how you like that compilation in case it shall have come into your hands Mrs Scott joins me in Compliments & I remain Dear Sir Yours very faithfully

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 26 March 1802

[*The Autographic Mirror*, 1865]

To [JOHN DAVIDSON,<sup>1</sup> NEWCASTLE UPON TYNE]

SIR,—I have to acknowledge with many thanks the information concerning the field of Otterbourne I intend to add in any subsequent Edition of this *Minstrelsy* a note stating that the twelve miles of Godscroft are Scottish computed miles which will bring his account nearer the truth than it is at present I would be particularly grateful for information as to the traditional history of the Battle if any is yet preserved by the County people and it would also be interesting to me to know whether any of the verses descriptive of the Ballad are

<sup>1</sup> To James Ballantyne John Davidson had written from 'Westgate Street, Newcastle, on 29th March 1802 'Being the owner of the Ground whereon the Battle of Otterbourne was fought,' he wishes to correct a mistake Scott has made in *The Border Minstrelsy* about that battle He has been misled by Godscroft, who says that Douglas was attacked at Otterbourne 12 miles from Newcastle, when it is at least 32 miles distant 'The present mansion house of Otterburn (the property of Mr Ellis of this Town, a professional man like myself) is built on part of ye anct Castle or Tower, close by the High way, according to the Song —*Walpole Collection* Mr Ellis is James Ellis, who was interested in Scott's collecting of ballads See Vol III, p 80, and the note there which states that Ellis and Davidson had bought the Otterbourne estate and divided it between them For the line, 'At Otterborne, in the hygh way,' see verse 13 of the English version A in F J Child, *English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1922), p 387

still current among them Your conection with this celebrated scene of Action and the attention which you have obviously paid to its history probably enable you to answer these enquiries and I think I may hope that your zeal for Border History will prevent you from regarding them as intrusive I am also very desirous of knowing whether there are any unpublished Ballads likely to be found upon the English side of the Boider, for as the publick have shown a disposition very favourable to my work I would willingly at any expence of time or trouble to myself render it as worthy of their notice as possible I have the honour to be Sir Your very obedt Servt

WALTER SCOTT

LASWADE COTTAGE, NEAR EDINBURGH

2nd April, 1802

[*Bowes Museum*]

To [JOHN JAMES] MASQUERIER,<sup>1</sup> EDWARDS STREET,  
PORTMAN SQUARE, LONDON

[Copy]

LASWADE COTTAGE 12 Sept 1803

SIR,—I am much gratified by your attention to the drawings for the Lay & shall endeavour to answer the questions you put to me about the Costume The Scottish harp was I believe the same with the Welch of which there is a sketch in Jones's reliques of the Welch Bards & of a size as you remark capable of being played upon the

<sup>1</sup> John James Masquerier (1778 1855), the painter He was bitterly attacked by William Cobbett on account of his picture of Napoleon reviewing the Consular Guards (1801) He painted portraits of Lady Hamilton, Harriet Mellon (afterwards Mrs Coutts and later Duchess of St Albans), Joanna Baillie, and Warren Hastings (See letter to Heber, 11th June, 1812, p 335) The above copy and that of the letter of 18th October were enclosed to Lockhart by Masquerier, who wrote to him from Brighton on 17th May, 1834, and said "The remarks on the Costume are interesting, for most of those who have made designs from his works have represented the *Tartan* instead of the low land *Maud*, even amongst the Borderers" —MS 935, *Nat Lib Scot*

knee The Minstrel should wear over his dress what we call a *Maud* or Low Country plaid It is a long piece of cloth about a yard wide wrapd loosely round the waist like a scarf & from thence brought across the breast & the end thrown over the left shoulder where it hangs loose something like a Spanish Cloak It is not of Tartan but of the natural colour of the wool with a very small black check which gives it a greyish look The Minstrels other clothes should have an antique cast, partaking something of the fashion of Chas the firsts time which the Old Man may be supposed to have retained A broad belt about his waist is also a part of his costume—it served to retain one end of the Maud & occasionally to carry a large knife or dagger

I think the introduction of the Dutchess daughter a very happy thought & shall be anxious to see the frontispiece previous to the engraving as any little criticism which may occur may be then made with more profit

I should think the young Buccleuchs *bat* would be any fantastic bough of a tree likely from its shape to attract a child's attention unless you suppose he brought out with him the broken piece of a lance on which he capered about the Hall The Blood hound much resembles in appearance a huge Spanish pointer with a large head long ears & a broad chest

Pray remember [me] to my good friend Heber and also to Tom Campbell Dr Stoddart<sup>1</sup> is I suppose by this time departed Believe me Dear Sir Your most obedt Servt

WALTER SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> John, later Sir John, Stoddart, who became prominently associated with *The Times* and *The New Times* Hazlitt married his sister, Sarah This year Stoddart went out to Malta, where he acted as the King's and the Admiralty Advocate till 1807 It was on his advice that Coleridge substituted Malta for Madeira in his quest of health, April 1804

To [JOHN JAMES] MASQUERIER

[Copy]

SIR,—I have delayed answering your favour of 26th Sept<sup>r</sup> till I could adjust with Messrs Longman & Rees the probable time of publishing the Lay The pressure of the times & some other considerations have induced us to Defer thoughts of publishing till the commencement of 1804 & they seem inclined to restrict the first edition to an 8vo with the frontispiece reserving the designs you have had the goodness to make for a subsequent publication in 12vo if the work shall take It will therefore be unnecessary at present to give you further trouble than that of finishing the paintings which you have begun I do not quite approve of the Laird of Buccleuchs golf-club—the game is doubtless ancient but it is also modern and by certain associations rather vulgar in a Scotchmans eye—let it be a piece of a broken branch as we formerly thought of

If in the interim betwixt this & next midsummer your amusement or professional engagements should lead you into this land of landscape I hope you will favour me with a visit & remain Your very obedt Servt

LASWADE COTTAGE

WALTER SCOTT

18th Oct 1803

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

To THOMAS THOMSON, CASTLE STREET, EDINR

[Extract]

DEAR TOM, I have been more distressd about the late political events than ever I expected to have been about politics of that kind in my life If Lord Mellville has wished to have set about systematic peculation the means were in his power to almost any calculable extent as Lord Lansdowne could have told Lord Henry Petty

How he came for a paltry accomodation from that scoundrel Trotter (whom I always thought a villain) to permit his fair fame to be so deeply sullied is almost as inexplicable as it was infatuated—he has in that view of the case sold his birth-right for a mess of pottage But I will say no more on so painful a subject <sup>1</sup>

I wish you & Miss T would make a start our length—you have no idea how delightful the country is, birds singing, lambs skipping, every thing but foliage & verdure & that fast approaching

I like the epigram on John Leslie vastly—it is quite delicious—I hope our Scoto-hibernian friend <sup>2</sup> will for once stumble into something like the right though if he does it will be for the first time in his life & should be hailed as something hardly short of a miracle

Skene is still with me & will be during my stay here—he is a charming companion & smokes a social pipe *a miracle* he is taking some vignettes for [the] next edition of the Lay in the mean time we walk eat drink & read nonsense I fear no good is to be expected from me till this busy time is over Do pray come to us if you can Love to Erskine—he said he would be here “but I would

<sup>1</sup> The opening portion of this letter goes into details about a recommendation Scott has made to Lord Aberdeen to place John Thomson in the kirk of Duddingston The above paragraph conveys the first reaction of Scott to the news of the impending impeachment of Henry Dundas, afterwards first Viscount Melville, the Treasurer of the Navy and the great fountain head of all patronage and power in Scotland For the details see any good History of Scotland, *The Trial, by Impeachment, of Henry Lord Viscount Melville, for High Crimes and Misdemeanours* (1806), C Matheson, *Life of Henry Dundas, etc* (1933), pp 344-81, and for the effect in Scotland see H Cockburn, *Memorials of His Time* (1856), pp 216-19, and our Vol I, pp 285-86 Scott, who is writing ten days after a resolution had been carried in the House of Commons, declaring Melville guilty of a gross violation of the law and a high breach of duty, shows considerable alarm as to the issue He quickly rallied to Melville's side, and when the impeachment before the House of Lords (29th April to 12th June, 1806) ended in an acquittal, Scott joined enthusiastically in celebrating the event in a great dinner, and wrote a song for James Ballantyne to troll, which cost him the friendship of the Countess of Rosslyn, Dugald Stewart, and others See Vol I, pp 304-5, and letter to Charlotte, 27th April, 1807, p 113

Perhaps the Irish friend referred to in our Vol I, p 135

never trow him ” I will acquaint you with the news from Ld A the instant I hear them

Anne's face is quite well Gilnockie & Sophia in high glee Charlotte sends best love to Miss Thomson & you  
Ever yours

W S

ASHESTIEL, 18 *Apl* 1805

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO COLIN MACKENZIE

[Copy—Extract]

CASTLE STREET, 29<sup>th</sup> *December*, 1805

DEAR COLIN,—Although you know that I am not very anxious about literary reputation in the gross, yet I would be utterly devoid of the feelings of an author if I were not highly flattered by the approbation of Mr Hastings,<sup>1</sup> to whose genius and talents we owe the preservation of the British Empire in the East The compliment which he pays me in supposing me capable of executing the colossal

<sup>1</sup> With a letter from St Germain's on 25<sup>th</sup> December, David Anderson sends to Mackenzie an exact copy of a letter he has received from Warren Hastings which runs “Have you read a poem by a Countryman of yours (I know not why I should call him mine), Mr Walter Scott, called *The Lay of the Last Minstrel* But I am sure you must I have read it twice, once to myself, and a second time to Mrs Hastings, who can repeat parts of it by heart We both felt ourselves inspired, as we read it, with the wish that Mr Scott would compose a poem of the nature of the old Minstrelsy, and make our gallant Nelson the Subject of it He would interweave in it, by Episode and Digression, all our naval Achievements of this and the late War, and make it not only the most interesting but if set to appropriate Airs adapted to common Capacities, the most useful Incentive to national Ardor I am sure that if it possessed the Spirit which this Gentleman and he only, could give it—in a word, the spirit which animates the Specimen which he has already given us—it would be sung with Enthusiasm by all Classes of the people, our Seamen especially, who are particularly fond of Songs which have for their subjects instances of naval prowess but for want of better are obliged to content themselves with the most miserable Ditties that ever pretended to Music or Poetry If you know Mr Scott let me entreat you to urge him to this Work and if you do not, do get acquainted with him on purpose and contrive that I may hear his first Lay before I die etc —*Walpole Collection* Scott's letter was printed in *The Scotsman* 28<sup>th</sup> March, 1906

design which he has sketched out is in every point of view as high as unmerited. Without dwelling, however, on my general incapacity to perform such a mighty task, for that might look like an affectation of modesty to hook in more praise, I will take the liberty of pointing out one great and insurmountable obstacle to my profiting by a hint derived from a quarter of such high authority. In order to produce a picturesque effect in poetry, a very intimate knowledge of the subject described is an essential requisite. I do not mean that this knowledge should be pedantically or technically brought forward, but it seems to me indispensably necessary that the poet should have enough of seafaring matters to select circumstances which, though individual and so trivial as to escape general observation, are precisely those which in poetry give life, spirit, and, above all, truth to the description. It is this which in painting constitutes the difference betwixt the work of one who has studied nature and a mere copyist of others' labours. Now, my total and absolute ignorance of every thing of and belonging to the sea would lay me under the necessity of generalizing my descriptions so much as to render them absolutely tame, or of substituting some fantastic and, very probably, erroneous whims of my own for those natural touches of reality which ought to enliven and authenticate the poem. Besides, consider that I may use what freedom I will with my ancient *preux chevaliers* and border moss troopers should I misrepresent any of their customs or manners, there is no chance of their rising to call me to debate the point *en champ clos*, or to carry off my milk cows from Ashiestiel, whereas in the case supposed my lucubrations must undergo the ordeal of some hundred critics in blue and white, all of them fully able to detect the slightest inaccuracy in the manoeuvres of my fleets and my mode of bringing my ships into action. The same objection applies with double force to my ever being an useful instrument in the patriotic plan of writing songs for our sailors. It is more than probable that the lowest

of Dibdin's, though bad enough, would always, as containing professional allusions and apt sea phrases, be preferred by the honest tars to the effusions of a mere land lubber like myself. At the same time, were I at my own disposal I do believe I could be tempted to take a cruise for the mere purpose of acquiring the stock of knowledge necessary to execute a plan which possesses such great capabilities. But this you know is quite out of the question. I wish it could be executed by someone who really possesses enough of enthusiasm, poetry, and nautical knowledge to do it some justice. You will easily conceive I do not mean that the sailor should be too visible—*ars est celare artem*—the description ought to be strictly true and just, but not loaded with the technical phraseology.

After all, the fate of the hero of the Nile, of Copenhagen, and alas! of Trafalgar is almost too grand in its native simplicity to be heightened by poetical imagery. I intended certainly to write, or rather to attempt a few lines, but though I have repeatedly sat down to the task, it has always completely overwhelmed me. If I execute what I propose, I will send them to you to be communicated to Mr Anderson, should you like them on perusal.

Excuse this long letter, a request from Mr Hastings was to be received as a command had the execution appeared possible. Will you express to Mr Anderson how much I am flattered by the approbation he has bestowed on the lay. If you think it worth while to send him this letter, it is altogether at your disposal.

[Anderson]

[Signed] WALTER SCOTT

To [JOHN CLERK]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR SIR,—I am greatly obliged to you for the loan of the MS<sup>2</sup> from which I have made some curious extracts

<sup>1</sup> At the foot of this letter is written in Scott's hand 'John Clerk Esq', probably John Clerk (Lord Eldon), from whose MS Scott says he copied the *Prophecy of Merlin* on 26th May 1797. See *Lockhart*, chap. viii.

In the British Museum Catalogue the letter is described as "on the Brute Chronicle." See letter to Ellis of 8th January, 1802 (p. 215), referring to



& as you wish to know what I think of its antiquity I trouble you with the following remarks which have occurred to me from the perusal of the curious Chronicle

I suppose (judging from the orthography, stile & character) that the MS has been written before the time of Henry VIth It is difficult I believe even for the best Diplomatists to judge of an English Manuscript's antiquity from the handwriting so as to ascertain any thing more than the century, & my opportunities have been far too limited for you to lay any stress on my opinion But I observe in the MS that the Saxon *Theta* is usually written with the head above the line as *ȝ* which was disused about Henry Vth's reign, posterior to which period that letter is written more like a modern *y* as this *y*

I have looked into most of the English Chronicles with a view of discovering whether the MS has ever been published But I cannot believe it has ever been printed It has no relation whatever to Fabian's Chronicle although it has been so titled by some ignorant person It is true that many passages appear to have been extracted from this Chronicle by Caxton in his *Fructus Temporum*, a history partly copied by him from Trevisa's translation of Higden's Polychronicon<sup>1</sup> & partly compiled from other historians—It is no doubt possible that this Chronicle may be a MS copy of Caxton's work in which case the date must be later than I have assigned by about fifty years as Caxton flourished in the reign of Edward IV But I do not incline to think so, both from the character

MSS Harl 266, and note Scott has apparently borrowed from Thomas Johnes (1748 1816), the translator of Froissart, a MS of the Chronicle probably when at work on *Sir Tristrem*, or when contemplating a translation of Froissart in 1805 See also letter to Murray, 25th March, 1810, pp 402 3

<sup>1</sup> *The Polycronycon, conteynynge the Berynges and Dedes of many Tymes, in eyght Books* Imprinted by William Caxton, 1482 Lowndes says, 'This historical Olla Podrida was originally written in Latin by Ranulph Higden, a Benedictine of the monastery of S Werburg who died about the year 1360 It was translated into English by John de Trevisa in 1357, from which Caxton made this version, and added an eighth book, or continuation from 1357 to 1460'

being apparently older than the time of Caxton & because there are many passages in the MS which do not occur in the *Fructus Temporum*. In particular although Caxton has inserted many of Merlin's prophecies in his history yet I cannot find that which is said to have spurred Glendower to his rebellion against Henry IV & which is alluded to by Shakespeare when he makes Hotspur tire of Glendower's *prosing* upon old vaticinations & signs of the times

Sometimes he angers me  
With telling me of the moldwarp & the ant  
Of the dreamer Merlin & his prophecies  
And of a diagon & a finless fish  
A clip-winged griffin & a moulted raven  
A couching lion & a ramping cat &c<sup>1</sup>

This prophecy of Merlin I believe to exist at length nowhere but in your MS although it is alluded to by Holinshed in the following passage "This (the division namely of England among the conspirators) was done as some have sayd through a foolish credite given to a vain prophetic as though King Henry was the *Moldiwarpe* cursed of God's own mouth & they three were the *dragon the lion & the wolf* which should divide this realm between them"—In the *Mirror for Magistrates* allusion is also made to this prophecy

Affirming Henry to be Gogmagog  
Whom Merlyn doth a Moldiwarpe ever call  
Accursed of God that must be brought in thrall  
By a wolf a dragon & a lyon strong  
Which should divide his Kingdon them among<sup>2</sup>

Legend of Owen Glendower

The whole prophecy is to be found at length in your MS & perhaps nowhere else. It is given as a genuine prophecy of Merlin for which reason it was probably omitted by Caxton as tending in the event to discredit

<sup>1</sup> *1 King Henry IV*, Act III, Sc. 1

<sup>2</sup> Stanza 23 of the tragedy of Owen Glendour in *The Mirrour for Magistrates*

the veracity of the prophet Its recovery must necessarily be very interesting to the Commentators & Admirers of Shakespeare In our old Scottish prophecies the *Moldwarp* or *mole* is usually applied to distinguish the English monarchs, no bad emblem indeed of the crooked policy by which Edward I and III<sup>d</sup> endeavoured to undermine the independence of Scotland The attributes of the moldiwarpe & his emblematical meaning are thus described by Sir David Lindsay of the Mou[n]th in a MS on Heraldry in our Library “The Modiewarpe is ane blinde beist haifand ane grouzie inform of ane pore ever beand worseland in the eird and signifies that he that bore it first (in his arms) has been ane thief & brigand hydand hym dailie in wodes & caverns pilyand & reifand, for it is said commonly he that evil dois hates the light”<sup>1</sup>

Were there nothing but this prophecy in your MS I should think it a great curiosity but I am persuaded other curious passages may be found although it would require a better historian than me to point them out There is a fragment of your chronicle preserved in the British Museum & quoted by Ritson in his ancient songs If I go to town this spring I will endeavour to find a moment to look at it

This is a long scrambling letter but you know a hobby horse is apt to serve his rider like a beggar on horseback Believe me Ever Dear Sir kindly & faithfully yours

CASTLE STREET *Thursday*

WALTER SCOTT

[*British Museum*]

TO DR ALEXANDER ADAM

MY DEAR SIR,—Will you permit me to request your assistance in a matter where I know no person better qualified than yourself to afford it? It has perhaps come to your knowledge that I have been for some time busy

<sup>1</sup> This MS is preserved in the National Library of Scotland *Collectanea Domini Davidis Lindesay De Mounthe*, f 23, Nat Lib Scot 31-3 20

on an entire edition of Dryden's works, which, to the shame of the past century, has not been undertaken by one better qualified for the task. I observe that Johnson criticises the title which Dryden has given to his *Lamentation or Elegy for Charles the Second* as not being classical. *Threnodia Augustalis*,<sup>1</sup> is, you know, the phrase employed. As a good editor, I will not, if I can help it, leave this blot on the poet's scutcheon, unless the criticism is confirmed by you after you have considered the authorities, if any occur, for the epithet *Augustalis*. I have turned over the few classics I have with me at this farm, but to no purpose, and therefore use the freedom of an old disciple to request your assistance, and that you will forgive this trouble from, Dear Sir, your affectionate humble Servant,

WALTER SCOTT

My address is Ashestiel, by Selkirk

[Docketed Aug 18, 1806]

[*Portraits by Sir Henry Raeburn, etc* ]

TO SIR SAMUEL EGERTON BRYDGES

SIR,—I am emboldened to trouble you as well from your general character of attachment to the cause of Literature

<sup>1</sup> In the introduction to the poem in his *Dryden*, Scott says "The Latin title of this poem, like that of the *Religio Laici*, savours somewhat of affectation, and has been taxed by Johnson as not strictly classical, a more unpardonable fault. My learned friend, Dr Adam, has favoured me with the following defence of Dryden's phrase: 'With respect to the title which that great poet gives to his elegy on the death of Charles, making allowance for the taste of the times and the licence of poets in framing names, I see no just foundation for Johnson's criticism on the epithet *Augustalis*. *Threnodia* is a word purely Greek, used by no Latin author, and *Augustalis* denotes, "in honour of Augustus", thus, *ludi Augustales*, games instituted in honour of Augustus, *Tac An* 1, 15 and 54, so *sacerdotes vel sodales Augustales*, *ib* and 2, 83 *Hist* 2, 95. Now as *Augustus* was a name given to the succeeding emperors, I see no reason, why *Augustalis* may not be used to signify, "in honour of any king." Besides, the very word *Augustus* denotes, "venerable, august, royal" and therefore *Threnodia Augustalis* may properly be put for, "An Elegy in honour of an august Prince"'"—Vol X (1808), p 60. On the same date as the above letter Scott writes to Heber on the subject. See p 289.

as from the interest which I am informd by Mr Nott<sup>1</sup> you are disposed to take in the Edition of Drydens works at present publishing If I rightly understood that Gentleman he informd me you had made an extract<sup>2</sup> from the Journal of the Officer who brought over the Duchess of York of that remarkable rainbow which appeared over Calais pier and was afterwards imitated in the Scenery of Albion & Albanus<sup>3</sup> & that you were not indisposed to communicate it for my assistance in illustrating that piece I can only say that in doing [so] you will confer a particular obligation to me and what is much more to the purpose will contribute to complete the first perfect edition of Drydens poetry I had hoped to have made this application in person & was soliciting an opportunity to do so, when this sudden dissolution hurried me Northward My address is "Castle Street Edinburgh" where any favour of yours will be thankfully received If in return I can at all contribute to assist your researches in the fields of ancient literature you will have a right to command my services I have been delighted with many of the articles in the *Censura*<sup>4</sup> which Messrs Longman & Co/ have had the goodness to hand me regularly I am with respect Sir Your most obedt Servant

WALTER SCOTT

LONDON 5<sup>th</sup> May [1807]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> G F Nott, for whom see note 2 to letter to Heber, 16th March 1806, p 282

<sup>2</sup> For the quoted "Extract from the Journal of Captain Christopher Gunman, commander of his Royal Highness's yacht the Mary, lying in Calais pier, Tuesday, 18th March 1683 4," see *Dryden's Works*, edited by Scott, Vol I (1808), pp 300 1 Brydges's reply of 17th May discloses that Captain Gunman is the great grandfather of Brydges's friend, James Gunman of Dover, who, having found his ancestor's original Journal, has supplied Brydges with a copy for Scott's preservation Gunman has had a picture on the subject painted by Serres the Marine painter — *Walpole Collection*

<sup>3</sup> For which see *Dryden's Works*, ed by Scott, I, pp 299 303

<sup>4</sup> Brydges's *Censura Literaria containing Titles, Abstracts, and Opinions of Old English Books, etc*, 10 vols (1805 9) See *ALC*, p 203

To HENRY MACKENZIE, HERRIOT ROW, EDINR

[Extract]

MY DEAR SIR,—I am honoured with your letter of the 4th and do not await a perusal of the Pursuits of Happiness to offer on that subject the opinion which you honour me so highly by asking<sup>1</sup> Whenever a character is drawn according to nature there may be pointed out in Society individuals to whom it might be appropriated & whose peculiarity of temper & manners may in reality have suggested it But when no private scandal is drag'd into daylight no personal reflections hazarded it is surely no reason for suppressing a poem of this nature because it contains descriptions so just that their prototypes are actually to be met with in Society I think there is a story of an obscure club in a country town who were highly offended at some of the papers in the Spectator because they imagined that the characters introduced referred to the members of their worthy fraternity In a word *qui capit, facit*, and were the case mine I would not give any person room to say that I had written a poem which I could not republish on account of the offence which it containd It would be giving a sanction to the gossiping of the good folks of Edinburgh, and certainly thinking of the poem as well as I do I am not sorry when I add that the leaving it out of your works will of itself recommend it to celebrity & that you really have it not in your power to smother your deserving offspring I hope therefore to see it admitted to the place in the present edition which seems really to be its birth-right & I think that leaving out the passages supposed to be

<sup>1</sup> For the omitted portion of this letter see Vol I, p 383, with note On 4th September Mackenzie writes "Have you heard lately from *Wm Rose*? I am afraid (rather on his Account than my own) that he has behaved ill to me I hope *Marmion* has grown at Ashystiel (as other Children do on Country Air) to his perfect Stature I long to see him in his perfectly accomplished State'—*Walpole Collection*

exceptionable would only animate the public to call for an uncastrated edition

I heard from Rose the other day for the first time after a silence of several weeks What you mention is so very unlike his usual habits that I really think there must have been some mistake in the matter He was at Cuffnells when he wrote to me When I answer his letter which I will do soon on purpose I will mention incidentally that you had expected to hear from him which will probably produce an explanation

Marmion is advancing but with slow steps, some disagreeable family business very unfavourable to composition having intervened I hope now to get him forwards against January

Mrs Scott joins me in kindest compliments to all your household and I ever am Dear Sir

Your obliged humble Servt

WALTER SCOTT

ASHIESTIEL 10 *Sept* [1807]

[*Fairley*]

TO FRANCIS DOUCE

DEAR SIR,—I hope I do not too far trespass on your kindness by introducing to your notice Mr Henry Weber by birth a German but a sedulous student of antiquities particularly of those which refer to dramatic & poetical antiquities He is extremely desirous of being known to you & communicating to you some plans which he is agitating for the illustration of our ancient poetry In particular he has made very great progress in a collection of metrical Romances for future publication For this his acquaintance with the ancient teutonick literature of this kind qualifies him very particularly He also made a transcript of the *Paradise of Dainty Devices* from a Copy in the Advocates Library which he is very desirous of collating with yours if you will have the goodness to

permit him <sup>1</sup> I am sure he will furnish you with notes of any variations which may occur

I hope Mr Miller has sent you a copy of my last essay towards a Life of Dryden which I beg you to accept as a testimony of my sincere gratitude for numerous favours & much information conferrd upon—Dear Sir Your faithful humble servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN 12 May 1808

[*Bodleian Quarterly Record*]

TO LORD DALKEITH

MY DEAR LORD,—I am induced to intrude upon you by a report which is very strongly prevalent here that James Clerk is to be made a Baron of Exchequer on the retirement of Baron Cockburn By this the Sherifffdom of Edinburgh will become vacant and the wishes of the Duke will doubtless be consulted before it is filled up Your Lordship cannot but remember that so far back as the Election 1806 we talkd of our freind William Rae as a person who might merit the Dukes countenance in the event now supposed His freindship for Lord Roslyn upon that occasion prevented his forming that personal claim upon his Graces freindship which he himself your Lordship & I were equally desirous should have been then merited But in the last election I need not recall to your Lordships recollection that Mr Rae's supporting

<sup>1</sup> On 4th March Weber had written 'Constable wishes to print 2 or 300 copies of the Paradyce & asked me to undertake the copying, revising, and illustrating if need be I am not aware if you perhaps have given up the idea of undertaking it yourself' Then on 23rd May he informs Scott of his reception in London 'Mr Douce was very friendly & delights to converse about German Romances which of course are quite new to him I find he has only a transcript of the Paradyce & that Mr Ellis has the original I gave him one or two broad hints respecting the copying some of his Romances but he would not take them'—*Walpole Collection* For Douce see Vol I, p 221, note, and letters to Heber and Ellis *passim* earlier in the present volume, and for Weber see note to letter to Ellis, 1st July, 1807, pp 290 2



the Interest of Chas Douglas occasioned an absolute rupture between him & his relation Lord R and subjected him to very severe & cruel misconstruction by those who thought themselves offended by his conduct I know that you my dear Lord will excuse the anxiety which I must necessarily feel upon this occasion which is in some degree personal to me as from my good wishes to Rae and to your house I was myself in some measure the means of deciding his conduct As he came a free and voluntary adherent to the support of Mr Douglas neither he nor I can claim any promise of the Dukes patronage on this occasion But I cannot help thinking that the very excellent talents which he displays for filling a situation of such consequence as well as his sufferings as I may term the breach of a long & intimate freindship with his relations the Rosslynes will have weight with his Grace on this occasion and that he will honour Mr Rae with his protection

I am under the necessity to make this application before I can fully ascertain the credit due to the Report because it is connected with another namely that the Sherifdom is to be bestowd on the Barons son Henry Cockburn <sup>1</sup> Mr C is a gentlemanlike young man and of respectable talents, but it would be right (independent of Mr Rae's interest) that the Duke should be aware that although a Depute Advocate he has always manifested & professd principles diametrically hostile to the Administration These he very honourably & candidly avowd before he accepted his present situation but it is worthy of his Graces serious consideration how far a Sheriff should be placed in this county of a political creed positively con-

<sup>1</sup> In his reply of 27th May 1808 Dalkeith reports that his father knows nothing about the arrangement relative to Mr Henry Cockburn, but will seek for accurate information, and that, unless any thing *particular* should occur, he will support Rae So will Dalkeith, who adds 'I should hardly think (under all the circumstances of the case) that it could be in contemplation to appoint Mr H Cockburn to the Sherifdom of Mid Lothian, which certainly may be looked upon as the most important of all, particularly in a Political point of view'—*Walpole Collection*

trary to his own If this is a part of Sheriff Clerks bargain it should be reformed or at least seriously considered

Excuse my dear Lord this long letter on a subject which you know I have many reasons for having deeply at heart Make my kind and most respectful Compliments to Lady Dalkeith & believe me &c &c W S

[c 25th May 1808] <sup>1</sup>

[Edin Univ Lib]

TO OWEN REES, MESSRS LONGMAN AND CO,  
PATERNOSTER ROW, LONDON

[Copy]

DEAR SIR,—I had some time since your Memorandum by Mr Ballantyne about the Romances but had not till now time to write I have very little wish to be exorbitant in my terms, although you must recollect that in our bargain for the Lay I allow'd your argument that you had paid too much for the Minstrelsy—surely the balance in this mode of reckoning now rests considerably in my favour To take your queries regularly

1stly I have no objection to make the alteration from 30 to 20 guineas the volumes being smaller than my original idea

2dly Translations cost me infinitely more trouble in correcting than the editing of original works—therefore I will unquestionably charge 20 guineas on each vol so translated over and above the sum paid to the translator

3dly My wish in introducing translations at all being simply to give novelty and value to the work you shall be

<sup>1</sup> “*Whitehall, May 27* The King has been pleased to appoint James Clerk, Esq advocate, to be one of the Barons of his Majesty's Court of Exchequer in Scotland, in the room of Archibald Cockburn, Esq resigned —To appoint William Rae, Esq advocate, to be Sheriff depute of the shire of Edinburgh, in the room of James Clerk, Esq ”—*The Scots Magazine*, vol lxxi, June 1809, p 476

perfectly at liberty to do what you think proper in accepting or rejecting them I should think six volumes may be fill'd with translations quite new to the English public

4thly I cannot give a complete list of the works which I think such a collection should comprise but conceive they will extend to between 30 & 40 volumes This however can be regulated by your own wishes

5thly Not having seen Dr Scott's new Translation of the Arabian Nights I cannot say whether I would chuse to receive them into my collection & certainly as 20 guineas per volume is no very high copy money it must be understood to have reference as well to those volumes which cost me no trouble as to those which peradventure may occasion a great deal

As to extra trouble the best way is to say nothing about it & drop all idea of the kind If I write my History of Romance I should set a high value on it but would certainly give you the refusal at a fair price as I think you would have a compleat title to it <sup>1</sup> It would give a very considerable value to the work and bear my name of course but I greatly doubt whether the trade as a body would be disposed to treat with me for it on the terms I am accustomed to although I have no doubt in being able to make a bargain easily with your house or many other individuals

<sup>1</sup> Messrs Longman reply on 16th June, asking if Scott would not be willing on any terms to write the History of Romance "The value of your History as a *postliminary* volume would certainly be very inferior to what it would be as a *preliminary* volume In allusion to your observation on the terms we should say, that had our literary connexion continued the occasion of your remark would have been long since prevented by the liberality we are accustomed to shew in cases of extraordinary success, when mutual confidence is presumed On this, as well as on other considerations, we have often regretted your disposal of Marmion to another house, although we feel no resentment on the occasion The Title to Schetky's Illustrations is printing in London Your name will be omitted as you request"

—*Walpole Collection* The publishers did not fulfil this promise, however, as the volume appeared in 1810 entitled *Illustrations of Walter Scott's Lay of the Last Minstrel, etc* by John C Schetky of Oxford The translation of *The Arabian Nights*, 6 vols, by Dr Jonathan Scott (1754 1829), was not published till 1811 See *A L C*, p 43

I shall wish [*sic*] a good deal of exertion to find me the books I want

Schetky's title page is I understand to be thrown off in London I wrote to him to say that I cannot consent to its bearing my name as author of the descriptions But he is wellcome to say in his preliminary advertisement that the Descriptions are taken from the passages of the Lay which the Drawings are designed to illustrate and that Mr Walter Scott has assisted him with further anecdotes traditional and historical This I think will serve Mr Schetky's purpose & I certainly would wish to oblige him thus far But distinctly understanding that my name is *not* to be in the Title page Believe me Dear Sir Ever yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 9th June [1808]

[*Edm Univ Lib*]

TO WILLIAM HAYLEY<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

MY DEAR SIR,—I have to return you my best and kindest thanks for the very obliging manner in which you have been pleased to employ your interest with your venerable friend in Southampton

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol II, p 513, note Hayley had written on 1st June that, having noticed in *Marmion* Scott's intention of publishing Sir Ralph Sadler's state papers, he would like, on Scott's behalf for this purpose, to enter into communication with "the lineal Descendant, & true Representative, of this celebrated Knight" He is a gentleman of 86, 'who has honoured me with an unclouded Friendship of 50 years, for he first received me with singular kindness as his Guest at Southampton when I was a Boy of 13' A letter of 1810 from this friend to Scott, in the Walpole Collection, reveals him as Richard Vernon Sadleir, whose papers Hayley encloses in a letter of 15th July 1808, in which also he states "I have just lost my worthy friend Seagrave, my Printer of Chichester" On 8th August he says his venerable Southampton friend has informed him that "in the Gentlemen's Magazine for May 1782 there is a tolerable Account (so far as it goes) of the Sadleir Family written by one who calls himself of the Line'"—*Walpole Collection* For Scott's references to R. Vernon Sadleir in *The State Papers, etc., of Sir Ralph Sadler, edited by A. Clifford*, with a Memoir by Scott (1809), see III, Appendix, pp 368, 378 9, 385 6

For the amusement & information of your respectable & obliging friend I send him a transcript of a letter from Sir Ralphs father to Sir Ralph himself wherein the family of Cromwell—from which you will see it evidently proved that the elder Sadler was as I formerly stated the Clerk or Comptroller or Steward of a certain nobleman unknown I hope Mr Sadler is too good an antiquary to consider this as militating against his ancestors in the article of his gentry The influence of the feudal system & the dependence which it generated pervaded all the ranks & departments of society and as the Lord solicited an official situation though with a menial title in the court of the sovereign he indemnified himself by filling his own castle hall with the neighbouring gentry as his Stewards, his Bailiffs, his equeries and his pages A private gentleman of middling fortune was greatly too weak a person to stand alone in those stormy times & his greatest chance of security was by linking himself to the fortunes of some great man who in his turn was strong in proportion to the numbers & importance of the gentlemen thus attached to him Old Jervis Markham somewhere says that the Dukes son was page to the prince, the earls younger son to the Duke, the knights second son the earl's servant, the Squires son wore the knights livery & the gentlemans son was the Esquires serving man—even younger brothers wore the blue coat & badge of the elder —& so much for the honour of ancient dependants & the gentlemanly profession (as my author calls it) of serving men

I am truly sorry for the loss you have sustained in your worthy printer &c

*Augt 14 [1808]*

ASHESTIEL BY SELKIRK

I have got the Magazine of 1782

*[Pierpont Morgan]*

TO WILLIAM MILLER, ALBEMARLE STREET, LONDON

DEAR SIR,—I wrote you a few days ago on the subject of the plays<sup>1</sup> On the other side you have I think all the tolerable modern classical tragedies properly belonging to the English stage & indeed many more than I think worthy of preservation unless to make a collection complete Those which I have introduced are marked with an asterisk, those which I have omitted are marked below There may be some trouble in getting copies for some of those marked, yet I think I can procure most of them In replacing the prologues & epilogues I suppose the cheapest way will be to employ MS in completing the former This I can have done for you as it will save the Bill The English comedies of merit are much more numerous than the tragedies I think I mentioned to you that the old plays would require another volume to complete the selection, but perhaps you may chuse to let this lie over I suppose you will cancel the prefaces to the British Drama—with the name of the play I would place the number of the Act at the top of the page

Somers has been long in the printers hands in a finished state and they are now getting on fast But it will be late in January before it is done I am in great haste &c

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 7th December [1808]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO THE REV<sup>D</sup> [HENRY] BOYD,<sup>2</sup> RATHFRELAND, COOKSTOWN,  
IRELAND

MY DEAR SIR,—I am terribly in default with you but before answering your two epistles I was willing to have

<sup>1</sup> See Vol II, p 113 and note 2

<sup>2</sup> Henry Boyd (*d* 1832), who published translations of Dante and others as well as original poems On 6th October 1808 he had written that he is busy with "the Revision of Araucana, and hopes to send over to Edinburgh the greater part of the copy in about 3 weeks to Mr Constable" If Scott

it in my power to say that I had read the manuscript of the Araucana carefully and had made some motion to a bookseller for the publication. But my time has been of late very much occupied by business of a nature very distinct from literary occupations & which has required unremitting attention. And unfortunately a disagreement has arisen between Constable my publisher and myself which prevents my having the influence necessary to negotiate with a personage of his importance. There is a dashing & very intelligent young man at present starting as a publishing Bookseller in Edinburgh under my auspices. He has good funds and is in a league offensive and defensive with John Murray of Fleet Street London whom I consider as one of the most active and intelligent of the London Trade. I have no doubt that these gentlemen will be disposed to print the Araucana saving you all expence and risque and allowing you one half of the clear profits of the first edition. I think that although the[se] Gentlemen contrive to have us brethren of the Quill rather at advantage in this way of sharing profits, yet it is better than to sell a work out and out because that is precisely selling a pig in a poke and therefore either cheating the bookseller or yourself as the humour of the public sets in for or against the work. What do you say to this? I would have liked much better to have put [it] in Constables hands who is established and is very active. But after waiting a long long time I fear our breach is totally irreparable. I think he could have done more for

will forward to London an enclosure he (Boyd) sends, he will receive a copy of his Dante. On 26th December he wonders if Scott has got the Dante. "People here think that the Tale of the Araucana is linked on that of the Spanish nation." On 22nd February 1809 he says he agrees with Scott's opinion that the printing of the Araucana might be some risk to the Booksellers. He had wished for an immediate sale, but a subscription has been suggested. What does Scott think of the suggestion?—*Walpole Collection*. *La Araucana* (1569) is an epic poem, after the manner of Ariosto and Tasso, on the conquest of Chile, by the Spanish poet, Alonso de Ercilla y Zúñiga (1533-94), who had taken part as a soldier in the war. See *Enciclopedia Italiana*, vol. XIV (1932), pp. 187-8. Boyd is seeking a publisher for his translation of this work. See *DNB*.

the work, but it is as I said before actually impossible for me to negotiate with him

The passages in the work into which I have dipt are I think very interesting—I have really hardly time to say more & this much I might & ought to have said ages ago but I always thought I might have solderd matters with Constable & did not care to mention our difference untill I found it irreparable

I caused Ballantyne hint your plan to John Murray who seemd disposed for the publication but askd whether you had disagreed with Cadell & Davies on which subject no reply could be given nor do I think any necessary

I will not omit to profit by your kind order for a copy of the Dante Some passages of that poet are particular favourites with me though I am not Italian sufficient to relish the whole<sup>1</sup> Pray be so good to address me at Edinburgh & write so soon as you find it convenient (this is a modest request) as I propose to be in London early in Spring & will then speak to Murray Cadell & Davies or whomever you please about the poem I am Dear Sir  
Your very humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 3 *february* [PM 1809]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO WILLIAM MILLER, ALBEMARLE STREET, LONDON

DEAR SIR,—I was duly obliged by your favour & am very much obliged by your kind intentions concerning the Rousseau I have not that authors works in any collected shape and will be happy to accept of your kind offer The Grammont<sup>2</sup> is today entirely out of my hands I have not added very much to the notes but something

<sup>1</sup> For other references to Scott's views on Dante see Vol IX, pp 99, 246, 332

This is Abel Boyer's translation (1714-19) of Count Anthony Hamilton's *Mémoires du Comte de Grammont*, which was revised and edited anonymously, with notes and illustrations, by Scott in 1811 See *DNB*



has been done & I hope the preliminary epistle will merit your approbation Understand that I retain the right to insert it in any collection of my things I may hereafter think of, though I don't believe I shall ever do so

I received this day from Messrs M & Millar a bale containing 4 Somers III Vol also the Ancient British Drama which looks very well & I hope will do equally I thank you for both and the little *Bibblosophia*<sup>1</sup> which I have not yet perused By the way I have *two* copies of Somers Vol II & there was one by some mistake sent from London to Mr Surtees, Mainsforth besides the one which I sent him from Edinr So there are two copies at your disposal & I beg to know whether they are to be sent to M & M or what is to become of them they are quite useless to me

The Lady of the Lake continues to press on I hope it will be out by the first of May There were so many inconveniences arose in the case of Marmion that I have determined no running copy shall be in the possession of any one but myself until the work is finished & I am sure you will admit it as a perfect excuse that I have sent the same answer to Longman's house If I am called to London (& without a strong call I will not come) I will bring the verses with me & have the pleasure of reading them to Mrs Millar & you If not I hope you will suspend your curiosity like that of my other friends till the work is finished I will I believe dedicate it to Lord Abercorn

We are here almost killed by some sort of vile Influenza which has affected my whole family but myself I beg kind compliments to Mrs M & am Your faithful Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 15 March 1810

[*Nat Mus of Antiqs of Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> *Bibblosophia*, or *Book Wisdom*, etc By an Aspirant [James Beresford], London, 1810 See *ALC* p 204

TO JOHN MURRAY

DEAR SIR,—I have been so busy with the poem<sup>1</sup> that I had no time to answer your kind letter of the 9th nor indeed to do anything else. We are getting on rapidly & I hope will not be later than the beginning of May. I will take care to give you such a start as to the plates as with industry on the part of your artist will certainly give you great [?] but I cannot send the poem in detail. When I send you a copy Miller will I suppose expect one as he has been very pressing. John Ballantyne has managed his part of the business greatly to my satisfaction.

I am delighted to hear of a reprint of Froissart, I had once a superb plan of that kind but have long laid it aside. In my apprehension it will be indispensable that the names so horribly mangled by Froissart & not amended by his translator Lord Berners should be restored at the bottom of the page. It would also be adviseable to compare the Translation with Mr Johnes & mark the passages which that Gentleman has restored from MSS. My intention was by the capital assistance of a superb MS. belonging to Lord Ancrum<sup>2</sup> to complete the imperfections in Lord Berners in his own language. But few people could do that for you excepting Southey who as well as I has too many eggs on the spit already. So you had better confine yourself to the ordinary language of this day. I should

<sup>1</sup> *The Lady of the Lake*

<sup>2</sup> See Vol II, p. 169 and note. From Oxford on 6th January 1805 Thomas Johnes, in connexion with his translation of Froissart, had thanked Scott for elucidations concerning the heroes of Otterburne (see Vol III, pp. 81-2), 'sadly disfigured by Froissart. Having known how very much foreigners disfigure all names but their own I endeavour to pronounce the names as I suppose they would, and by this means have frequently stumbled on the right. I have just heard that after very great difficulties, a friend in Germany has obtained the liberty of collating the famous Manuscript of Froissart at Breslau. It has been supposed the only correct & complete edition—I have always had my doubts of this, but now shall have none.' He would like Scott to see his library which contains 'a curious MS. with the notes of lays of different Minstrels from Thibaut de Champagne. And as you must be fond of Romance [I] have the most complete collection of Don Quixote's library existing'—*Walpole Collection*

think Park<sup>1</sup> would edit the Book excellently or Mr Turner But if it is only a reprint still names should be restored & blunders corrected

I gave Mr Johnes some hints for doing this but he only printed my sketch Notes without following it out See the Battle of Otterbourne Vol IV p 19 Johnes Imperfect as it is it will give you some hint of what I mean

You must excuse my returning the 1st Vol of said translation It would be breaking my invariable rule *never* to return any book that I review if I think it worth keeping In this case moreover there was a most especial communing [?] & agreement between Constable & me—so that I have completed & bound the book & restoration is altogether out of the question You must place it to account of the Review—do you recollect the Irish Doctor in the farce “Return my fees ? Arrah, is the man mad ?” Believe me ever Yours truly

W SCOTT

EDINBURGH 25 March 1810

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO J W CROKER

MY DEAR SIR,—I drop you these few lines not to engage you in correspondence for which I am aware you have so little time but merely to thank you very sincerely for the eig[h]th edition of your beautiful & spirited poem and the kind letter which accompanied it<sup>2</sup> Whatever the plac-

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Park, for whom see note to letter to Ellis, 21st August, 1801, p 189 “Turner” is, of course, Sharon Turner

Sending him a new edition of his Talavera song, Croker says on 4th October “I was glad to register *in print* my obligation to you, which I have done the rather, because I am by no means satisfied with the reviews that have professed to criticise your works & your style That from your good town of Edinburgh, sometimes just, is, I think, generally uncandid, and its perpetual introduction of Campbell & Southey by way of comparison, where there is really nothing to compare, convinces me & will I think all readers that their critique smacks of party I am an humble poetaster, but I could not refrain from speaking, in my loudest voice, my admiration of a style so original and so captivating —*Walpole Collection* Croker refers, of course, to *The Lady of the Lake* Croker’s poem is in the style and verse Scott had made popular

tised and hackneyd critic may say of that sort of poetry which is rather moulded on an appeal to the general feelings of mankind than the technical rules of art the warm and universal interest taken by those who are alive to fancy & feeling will always compensate for his approbation whether entirely withheld or given with tardy and ungracious reluctance Many a heart has kindled at your Talavera which may be the more patriotic for the impulse as long as it shall beat I trust we shall soon hear from the Conqueror of that glorious day such news as may procure us "another of the same" His excellent conduct joind to his high and undaunted courage make him our Nelson on land & though I devoutly wish that his force could be doubled I shall feel little anxiety for the event of a day in which he is only outnumbered by one third Your acceptable Bulletin looks well and auspiciously—the matter of Lucien Bonaparte is one of the most surprising which has occurr'd in our day A Frenchman refusing at once a crown & declining to part with his wife is indeed one of the most uncommon exhibitions of an age fertile in novelties as wonderful as portentous

Let me not conclude without thanking you for your friendly & partial note There are some folks with whose praise I am not less delighted because I am sensible it goes beyond my deserts being willing to set down to the account of a friend what is overpaid to the author

I inclose a packet for Gifford & a letter for George Ellis I intend soon to trespass on you for a frank to Mr Polwhele a clergyman & brother poet to whom I wish to send a parcel & know no better way than inclosing it to your charge Believe me my dear Sir Ever your truly grateful & obliged

W SCOTT

ASHESTIEL 10 *October* [1810]

[*Yale Univ Lib*]

## TO ALEXANDER BOSWELL OF AUCHINLECK

DEAR SIR,—I am truly obliged to you for the copy of your beautiful & spirited highland poem<sup>1</sup> and think myself very fortunate that I can in some degree shew my gratitude by furnishing you with some curious additional notices concerning the tragedy on which you have founded such an elegant structure I derived them chiefly from my excellent friend Mr Buchanan of Cambusmore near Callendar whose age carries him back to the days of Clan-ship and who I dare say will furnish you with the particulars in a more authenticated shape should you wish it But most of the passages I am about to mention are well-known to the deer-stalkers in Glenartney & when shooting there about fifteen or sixteen years ago I saw the spot averd by Tradition to be the scene of the murder of Jo Drummond of Drommon[d]er[n]och

It was then told me & has been since confirmd by Cambusmore that when the party of MacGregors who surprized Dromon[d]er[n]och had killd him they cut off his head & lapping it in the corner of a plaid proceeded to the house of Stewart of Ardvoirlich who was married to a sister of Dromon[d]er[n]och Bread & cheese was placed before them according to the hospitable custom of the country while the Lady (whose husband was absent) went to provide a more substantial meal Before her

<sup>1</sup> *Clan Alpin's Vow A Fragment*, printed in 1811 For a full account of the substance of this letter see Introduction, with Appendixes I and II, to *The Legend of Montrose*, Border Ed., pp. xix, xx, xxvii, ix On 23rd December 1810 Boswell had given Thomas Thomson some account of this poem "It ran out in spite of me to nearly five hundred lines I think some of it is in Walter Scott's worst manner I laboured under much disadvantage, as I was utterly ignorant of the scenery of the country I have, for the sake of variety, and, I think, with more dramatic truth, made my Macgregor red—Scott has made him black"—C. Innes, *Memoir of Thomas Thomson* (1854), pp. 128, 9 Boswell replies to Scott on 28th February 1811 "What you have been so good as send me regarding the Murder is very interesting particularly the Tradition with regard to the desertion of Ardvoirlich — *Walpole Collection*

return the ruffians had placed the bloody head of her brother on the table with a piece of bread & cheese in the mouth. The poor woman whose brain gave way before such a spectacle of horror fled screaming into the woods where she wandered for a long time (for several weeks I believe it is said) untill she was found and brought home in a state of raving insanity. To complete [t]he wild horror of the narrative the Lady Ardvairlich having been pregnant at the time of her brothers murder was delivered of a son James Stuart of Ardvairlich whose history had an odd coincidence with the horrible scenes which preceded his birth. He was a man of great personal strength & activity but of a ferocious temper & ungovernable passions. When Montrose took arms in the cause of Charles I one of the first who joined him was the young & gallant Lord Kilpont eldest son of the Earl of Menteith with a considerable number of friends & followers. Ardvairlich was of the former number & so much beloved by the young nobleman that he often shared his bed with him. On the third night after Montroses victory at Tippermuir Ardvairlich poniarded Kilpont slew the centinel who endeavoured to stop him in his flight and made his escape to the Covenanters. He is said in Montroses Memoirs to have premeditated this horrid assassination but tradition gives a more favourable turn to the story. Ardvairlich dissatisfied with Montrose or doubting the justice of the cause he had engaged in resolved to desert him & endeavoured to persuade Lord Kilpont to take the same step. When his advances were rejected with contempt he grasped his hand to bid him farewell and in an agony of feeling between anger shame & sorrow exerted his extraordinary powers of muscle & wrung it so hard that the blood started from beneath the finger nails. Kilpont in pain & indignation struck him a blow with his hand which Ardvairlich repaid with a thrust of his dirk & thus deprived Montrose of one of his most powerful & gallant followers. What became of Ardvairlich I have forgotten if I ever knew.

He certainly was not born to die in his bed Probably the present laird knows something of his fate <sup>1</sup>

I never heard the very curious circumstance of the dead *pow* mentiond If (as you will probably find yourself obliged to do) you give your charming legend to the public in form & chuse to make any addition to the notes from what I have now transcribed I will be happy to have had the pleasure of adding elucidation to what I admire I am Dear Sir Your obliged humble Servant

EDINBURGH 27 *february* [1811]

WALTER SCOTT

[*Yale Univ Lib*]

TO THE REVD DR [ROBERT] DOUGLAS, MINISTER OF THE  
GOSPEL, GALASHIELS

Copy Acceptance of the above Offer <sup>2</sup>

MY DEAR SIR—I am favouird with your letter of the 19th Current of which to prevent mistakes I subjoin a

<sup>1</sup> For a communication, dated 15th January, 1830, from Robert Stewart of Ardvoirlich to Scott, dealing with this story, see Postscript to Introduction to *The Legend of Montrose*, Border Ed., pp. xxxi iv

This copy, in Scott's own hand, is written overleaf after the following missive letter, addressed from Selkirk 19 June 1811, by Dr Douglas "Dear Sir, In a conference this day with Mr Charles Erskine & Mr Laidlaw at Peel, I offered my lands of Newharthaugh for four thousand guineas, the entry at Whity 1812, & the price to be then paid, or legal intr upon it from that term, with liberty to the purchaser to retain £2500 on that condition for five years Of this offer they accepted & named you as the purchaser At their desire I address this letter to you containing the chief articles of the bargain, expecting your answer in course, & wishing you health long to enjoy the fruits of my labours & outlay With best respects to Mrs Scott, I remain Dr Sir Yours respectfully Rob Douglas On the third sheet, also from Selkirk on the same day, Charles Erskine writes "Mr Laidlaw & I have this forenoon had a hard prigg with the Doctor and the effects of it are on the preceding page [i.e. Dr Douglas's letter as above] We could not break the Doctor down of the Four Thousand Guineas The Rent including Interest paid by the Tenant for expenditure on Houses is £140 and considering the planted ground perhaps altho' dear your purchase is not *extravagant* You must write the Doctor in course of Post accepting his offer either unlimited or under any conditions that occur to you If you wish any more formal Minute of Sale upon Stamp or otherways let me know & it shall be done In the mean time write the Doctor & clench the bargain"—*Bayley Collection* See also letter to Charles Erskine, 2nd June, 1811, Vol II, pp. 500 1, and letter of Laidlaw in note

copy I hereby accept the offer you have made me of the lands of Newharthaugh under the various stipulations and at the price expressd in your letter I shall value the purchase more as being in your vicinity and I am with great regard Dear Sir your very humble Seivant

/signd/ WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 20 *June* 1811

To this acceptance is subjoined a copy in my hand of Dr Douglas[’s] letter of the 19 June

[*Bayley*]

‘To THOMAS SHERIDAN <sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

It is a good thing enough to see you, the Son of the first Dramatic Author of Our, or perhaps of any Age or Country, and “Yourself a Muse” besides, applying to Scotland for Theatrical assistance <sup>2</sup> And I might very well reply to your flattering application in the words of Scripture “Are not the Pharphar and Abana, Rivers of Damascus, better than all the Rivers of Israel ?” <sup>3</sup> But, *sans phrase*, I should be happy to do anything you might

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Sheridan (1775 1817), the only son of Richard Brinsley Sheridan

From “London, 11 South Audley Street,” on 15th September Thomas Sheridan had written “The facility with which the beautiful Poem of the Lady of the Lake was adapted to the stage has suggested to me that you might not perhaps feel averse to write something in that style intentionally for the purpose I grieve to say that those melodramas are sought with greater avidity by the public than any legitimate dramatic Production, & my hope is that your genius may render *one* at least *really* worthy the approbation they so generally obtain The Construction of these Pieces is perfectly lawless Pantomime—musick &c are introduced at pleasure to impress, or assist, the Instrument, or develop the Plot Comus [?] is the only established Piece long acted on the stage wh approaches this species of Entertainment, but there the *action* bears much less proportion than is usual in these modern Dramas—and I cited it (not in the way of comparison God knows) but to instance the success with wh Poetry may be adapted to the stage in this Description of Composition You have unlimited authority over our Scene Painter, Mechanicks, Corps de Ballet, orchestra, vocal, serious & comic Performers, binding [?] our Pantomimists to do your bidding —*Walpole Collection*

<sup>3</sup> II Kings, v, 12



consider as useful, and that not in a Mercantile way, *because I make it a rule to cheat nobody but Booksellers, a race on whom I have no mercy* The unsurmountable difficulty, as I very lately explained to *John Kemble* on a similar application, is my little acquaintance with Stage effects Upon which, rather than upon any Poetry that may be thrown into the language of the Piece, the success of a new Play must necessarily turn I will be most happy to write a Song, or two, for you at any time, or do anything, within the compass of my slender Abilities, to help off any of the *Lame Ducks* which Mr Sheridan's more material Avocations, and your own Indolence, permit to waddle upon the Stage, for fault of better

I congratulate you, my Dear Sir, upon your return to Britain, and, I hope I may add, upon the compleat re-establishment of your health I am, at present, busy planning a Cottage by Tweedside, where, perhaps, we may one Day have an opportunity of talking over our Plans, Literary and Dramatic, etc , etc

19th September 1811

TO THE REVD DR [ROBERT] DOUGLAS OF GALASHIELS

[Extract]

favourd by Mr Charles Erskine

MY DEAR DOCTOR,—Receive my best thanks for your kind attention in sending me the Roman curiosity <sup>1</sup> It is I believe a sacrificing vessell from which the wine was pourd on the brows of the victim, so it is to a hobby horsical Antiquary omen faustum felixque I shall write

<sup>1</sup> Dr Douglas explains on 27th November how it was found ‘One of our labourers, in digging a ditch, struck a brazen vessel, & the stroke knocked off one of its three legs Similar vessels have been found in the neighbourhood’—*Walpole Collection* Mr Curle suggests that the vessel was a mediæval cooking pot With regard to the patera, he says ‘There was a bronze Roman patera at Abbotsford It is now in the National Museum of Antiquities, Edinburgh’

to give the man some reward and if any thing else should  
be found the finder may rely I will pay the full value  
Believe me dear Sir Very truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 2 *December* [1811]

The ancient patera came just at the same day with an  
immense silver charger big enough to hold the head of a  
Second St John, or a baron of beef which we presby-  
terians hold better than a relique It is a present from  
my brethren the Clerkes of Session

[*The Misses Thomson*]

TO THOMAS EAGLES<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

SIR,—I am favoured with your letter, and without pre-  
tending to touch upon the complimentary part of it, I  
can only assure you that I am much flattered by your  
thinking it worth while to appeal to me on a point of  
national antiquities I am very partial to Chevy Chase,

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Eagles (1746 1812), classical scholar He became a merchant  
and collector of customs at Bristol He was a painter and musician, and  
took a keen interest in the Rowley and Chatterton controversy, on which  
he left some dissertations Selections from the first two books of his trans-  
lation of *Athenæus*, with notes, appeared anonymously in *Blackwood's  
Magazine* for 1818 19 The above letter is introduced by a letter to the  
Editor of *Blackwood's Magazine* (in the issue of January 1833) from his son,  
John Eagles (1783 1855), artist and author (see *DNB*), who explains  
that the correspondence relates to the picture, 'The Field of Chevy Chase,'  
the greatest work of Edward Bird (1772 1819), the painter "The original  
sketch in oils was in gratitude presented by the painter to Sir Walter Scott,  
and is, I presume, now at Abbotsford" John's epistle is dated "Dec 3,  
1832" He then gives his father's letter, from "L[angto]n Court [nr  
Bristol], Dec 3, 1811," in which Thomas desires information about the  
costume and armour of the Scots near the end of the fourteenth century  
for "the benefit of a very ingenious friend [*i.e.* Bird], who has formed the  
design of a picture, taken from the following stanza of the old ballad of  
Chevy Chase,

'Next day did many widows come, &c.'

The old ballad is called 'The Hunting of the Cheviot' See F J Child,  
*English and Scottish Popular Ballads* (1922), pp 393 400 Lord Stafford  
bought Bird's picture See Vol III, pp 226 and note 1, 227-28, 232-33  
and note 5

although perhaps Otterbourne might have afforded a more varied subject for the pencil. But the imagination of the artist being once deeply impressed with a favourite idea, he will be certain to make more of it than of any other that can be suggested to him. In attempting to answer your queries, I hope you will allow for the difficulty in describing what can only be accurately expressed by drawing, &c. &c. I shall at least have one good thick cloak under which to shelter my ignorance. I greatly doubt the propriety of mourning cloaks—but a group of friars might with great propriety be introduced, and their garb would have almost the same effect. I am not aware there was any difference between the defensive armour of the Scots and English, at least as worn by the knights and men-at-arms, yet it would seem that the English armour was more gorgeous and shewy: they had crests upon the helmet before they were used in Scotland, and at the battle of Pinkie, Patten<sup>1</sup> expresses his surprise at the plainness of the Scottish nobility's armour. I conceive something like this may be gained by looking at Grose's ancient armour, and selecting the more elaborate forms for the English—the plate-armour for example, while the Scots might be supposed to have longer retained the ring or mail-armour. There should not be a strict discrimination in this respect, but only the painter may have this circumstance in his recollection. There are at Newbattle two very old pictures on wood, said to be heroes of the Douglas family, and one of them averred to be the chief of Otterbourne. The dress is very singular—a sort of loose buff jerkin, with sleeves enveloping the whole person up to the throat, very curiously slashed and pinked, and covering apparently a coat of mail. The figure has his hand on his dagger, a black bonnet with a feather on his head, a very commanding cast of features, and a beard of great length. The pictures certainly are extremely ancient, and belong to the Douglas family.

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol. III, p. 246 and note 1, p. 247

Query 2 The knights and men-at-arms on each side wore the sword and lance, but the English infantry were armed with bows—the Scots with long spears, mallets, and two-handed swords, battleaxes of various forms were in great use among the Scots The English also retained the brown bill, so formidable at the battle of Hastings, a weapon very picturesque, because affording a great variety of forms, for which, as well as for the defensive armour worn by the infantry of the period, see Grose, and the prints to Johnes's *Froissart*

Query 3 Those of the followers of Douglas that are knights and men-at-arms, may have their helmet at the saddle-bow, or borne by their pages—in no case in their hands The infantry may wear their steel-caps or morions, the target or buckler of the archers, when not in use, was slung at their back like those of the Highlanders in 1745 I am not aware that there was any particular mode of carrying their arms at funerals, but they would naturally point them downwards with an air of depression <sup>1</sup>

Query 5 In peace the nobility and gentry wore cloaks, or robes richly furred, over their close doublets The inferior ranks seem to have worn the doublet only, look at Johnes's *Froissart*, which I think you may also consult for the fashion of Lady Percy's garments Stoddart<sup>2</sup> some years ago painted a picture of Chaucer's Pilgrims, which displayed much knowledge of costume

Query 6 I am not aware there was any prevailing colour among the peasantry of each nation, the silvan green will of course predominate among Percy's bowmen

Query 7 The bonnet, the shape of that of Henry VIII (but of various colours), was the universal covering in this age The following points of costume occur to my

<sup>1</sup> In Query 4 he repeats the description of the lowland plaid contained in the letter to Masquerier, 12th September, 1803, p. 379 For Johnes and his *Froissart*, see Vol. III, p. 81 and note, present volume

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Thomas Stothard (1775-1834), painter and book illustrator The picture in question is "The Canterbury Pilgrims setting forth from the Tabard Inn"

recollection in a border ballad (modern, but in which most particulars are taken from tradition) Scott of Harden, an ancient marauding borderer, is described thus

“ His cloak was of the forest green,  
Wi’ buttons like the moon ,  
His trews were of the gude buckskin,  
Wi’ a’ the hair aboon ”<sup>1</sup>

The goat-skin or deer-skin pantaloons, with the hair outermost, would equip one wild figure well enough, who might be supposed a Border outlaw You are quite right respecting the badges, but besides those of their masters, the soldiers usually wore St George’s or St Andrew’s cross, red and white, as national badges The dogs of the chase, huge dun greyhounds, might with propriety, and I think good effect, be introduced, suppose one mourning over his master, and licking his face A slaughtered deer or two might also appear to mark the history of the fight, and the cause of the quarrel<sup>2</sup>

I have often thought a fine subject for a Border painting occurs in the old ballad called the *Raid of the Reidswire*, where the wardens on either side having met on a day of truce, their armed followers and the various tribes mingled in a friendly manner on each side, till, from some accidental dispute, words grew high between the wardens Mutual insult followed The English chief addressing the Scottish,

“ Rose and raxed him where he stood,  
And bid him match him with his marrows  
Then Tynedale heard them reason rude,  
And they let fly a flight of arrows ”<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> See “Gilmanscleuch” in James Hogg’s *The Mountain Bard* (1807), p. 46

<sup>2</sup> On 27th December Thomas Eagles says that previous to the receipt of the above letter, Bird the artist, ‘ had introduced the two picturesque circumstances recommended by you ’—the one of the huge deerhound licking his master’s face, the other depicting the slaughtered deer “The portraits at Newbottle are extremely curious, I wish they were engraved, if genuine, they prove incontestibly that feathers were worn in the bonnet at that early period, which has been denied” —*Walpole Collection*

<sup>3</sup> *The Raid of the Reidswire*, stanza 1x See *Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border*, ed T F Henderson (1902), II, p. 24

The two angry chieftains, especially Forster, drawing himself up in his pride and scorn, would make a good group, backed by the Tyndale men, bending and drawing their bows, on the sides you might have a group busied on their game, whom the alarm had not yet reached, another half disturbed, another, where they were mounting their horses, and taking to their weapons, with the wild character peculiar to the country

This is, Sir, all, and I think more than you bargained for I would strongly recommend to your friend, should he wish to continue such subjects, to visit the armouries in the Tower of London, where there are various ancient, picturesque, and curious weapons, and to fill his sketch-book with them for future use I shall be happy to hear that these hints have been of the least service to him, or to explain myself where I may have been obscure And I am, Sir, your very humble servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDIN 8th Dec 1811

If Douglas's face is shewn, the artist should not forget the leading features of his family, which were an open high forehead, a long face, with a very dark complexion [Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine, January, 1833]

TO JOHN PINKERTON <sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR SIR,—I return your Manuscript which I have perused twice with great pleasure It contains what every

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol I, p 138 and note 2 This letter accompanies the MS of Pinkerton's play, *The Heiress of Strathern or The Rash Marriage* "Another national tragedy called the *Heiress of Strathern* was brought out on March 24th [1813], for the first time on any stage, but like most productions during this period, did not draw"—DIBDIN, *Annals of the Edinburgh Stage*, p 267 A pencil note among the Pinkerton papers, signed 'J M' [i.e. John Murray of the Edinburgh Theatre], says "3 Acts have passed off well—one or two expressions excited some noise", and another to Pinkerton, signed 'H W' "Dear Sir All goes on extremely well Mrs Siddons acts delightfully A few drunken fellows hiss but are soon overpowered End of 3d Act"—*Nat Lib Scot* See R P Gillies, *Recollections of Sir Walter Scott* (1837), pp 188 89

person would have expected from the author an accurate and interesting description of the manners of the times when his plot is laid , & also what I at least would have further expected (as being intimately acquainted with your early poetical efforts) much beautiful & appropriate poetical diction The interest in the latter part especially is deeply & painfully interesting—so much so that I am not quite sure that these “ giddy paced times ” would not be as much terrified as pleased with it If the piece should ever be brought on the stage abbreviation would be probably recommended , which might be easily managed as some of the earlier scenes however interesting in themselves add nothing to the progress of the action It strikes me also that as the fatal discovery determines the sentimental interest of the play and leaves no outlet of happiness for the lovers the audience might feel the succeeding scenes though full of bustle & interest of action rather misplaced These my dear Sir are faults (if faults they be) which will never strike the reader who goes over the play with attention but are merely calculated I should think to embarrass the representation On this subject however some person of good poetical taste & experienced in theatrical matters would be the surest critic for they acquire by observation a degree of *tact* which cannot be supplied by any thing but experience I have made as you requested some few pencil markings where it occurred to me that the language might admit of being improved— You will excuse the freedom I thought myself called upon to use in these remarks & believe me Very truly your obliged humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

CASTLE STREET [EDINBURGH]

15 *January* [1813]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO WILLIAM EL[L]IOT-LOCKHART, M P , OF  
BORTHWICKBRAE <sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR BORTHWICKBRAE,—In common with the rest of our brethren you cannot but take a deep interest in our noble Library and must consequently be ready to ward off the very deep wound which you will observe is aimed against it. It is in every respect unmerited for the institution has always been rather a public than a corporation property & the greatest share the Faculty have had in it has been the expence of enlarging & maintaining it. You know how inadequate our funds are though so large a part of them have been always dedicated to this purpose & that if we are deprived of the valuable privilege now proposed to be withdrawn they will be unequal to the burden of supporting this princely collection. Wherefore gird up your loins & fight manfully for your brethren & the Laigh Parliament House. Ever Yours most truly

EDINR 27 May 1813

WALTER SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO THE REVD DR [EDWARD] BERWICK, ESHER, LEINLIP,  
IRELAND

MY DEAR SIR,—I have been long absent from home in Dumfriesshire and in the North of England which has prevented my sooner acknowledging your kind letter which my laziness as a correspondent so little deserves. Nobody I believe thinks of those to whom I have been obliged more frequently and gratefully than myself but I too often fall under the suspicion of neglecting them by forgetting to write so regularly as I should do.

<sup>1</sup> This letter accompanies a printed circular regarding the copyright privilege of the Advocates Library. In consequence of an application by the booksellers to Parliament, there was fear of a Bill being introduced to abolish the right of the Faculty of Advocates to receive a copy of every book entered at Stationers Hall. Elliot Lockhart was Member for Selkirkshire, see postscripts of letters to Charlotte, 19th and 22nd April, 1807, pp 109 and 111 respectively.



I rejoice to hear that your literary labours go on and prosper I have not seen the lives<sup>1</sup> you mention but have wrote to Ballantyne to send me a copy which I trust he will not neglect As to reviewing them which I would do with the greatest pleasure I am afraid they are beyond me in point of learning—my education was very irregular and I have long neglected any little classical attainments which I ever acquired and which at best were very superficial I do not know how I stand with Gifford the only Reviewer wt whom I have any interest I have not given him any assistance for these two years & I believe he thinks himself rather unkindly treated But I will take an early opportunity to apologize for myself and make some interest for [you] He will probably put the article into the hands of some Scholar, a better judging one I trust than the Reviewer of Apollonius Tyanus Swift is all printed but the Life which is going through the press slowly As the biographer is naturally the apologist of his author most devoutly do I wish I could quite clear the business of Vanessa but the truth seems to be that Swift had imprudently got into a situation where he could neither do justice to Stella to Vanessa nor to himself I should like of all things to have the Gullivers travels & if the notes be numerous & of consequence I would give almost any money to be the purchaser, though I should be quite as well pleased if it fell into the hands of any amateur who had the liberality to allow me the use of the variations You will oblige me greatly by giving a commission for me if the books come to sale—I should not grudge five or six guineas in the least

<sup>1</sup> For previous (and one later) letters to Berwick *re* Swift, Vanessa, Apollonius, &c, see our Vols II and III Berwick had written on 12th August Have you seen the Lives which were printed for me by Ballantyne I wish you would get them & read them & *review them* For the *Lives* see Vol III, p 58 and note 1 “The Bishop of Ossory is dead—& therefore we have now some chance of getting a sight of his *Gullivers travels* which contains many of Swifts MS notes I know Miss White applied for it, & was refused—Death has unlocked it for us—I will be on the watch—as his Books are all to be sold by auction in October next You see I don’t forget you ’—*Walpole Collection*

I wish I knew of any thing here [which] <sup>1</sup> would give you pleasure [and] <sup>1</sup> satisfaction A great sale of rare & curious books will take place at Edinr this winter—would you like to have a catalogue when they appear? I could send it through a friend at the Castle <sup>2</sup> I am glad Rokeby found you & had a favourable acceptance The clashing of rhimes & dipping ones fingers in ink seems to be an inveterate disease when it possesses itself of the system for I am frightened myself to think how fast Quarto has succeeded Quarto I have however declined becoming a Bard ex officio by declining the laureateship which was offerd me in a verv flattering manner But the objections to the situation were manifold & no man with any regard to his literary character would accept it coupled with the drudgery of writing these absurd odes—Adieu my Dear Sir Believe me your truly grateful & obliged

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE 5 *Sept* [PM 1813]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO WALTER HENRY WATTS,<sup>3</sup> 15 OLD BOND STREET, LONDON  
[Copy]

DEAR SIR,—I have to return you my best thanks for the Political Memento yesterday received and to thank you for the honour you have done my lines by placing them in the title-page of your interesting and I trust most useful volume I can only say that in venturing upon any thing like prediction concerning the great events which have since so amply outdone our most sanguine hope, I relied in the first place on Divine Providence, which I trusted could never permit the permanent duration of a system

<sup>1</sup> MS cut at these places

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Dublin Castle

<sup>3</sup> Walter Henry Watts (1776 1842), journalist and miniature-painter He became Parliamentary reporter to *The Morning Post*, 1803 13, and to *The Morning Chronicle*, 1813 40 See an account of him in the *Autobiography of William Jerdan* iv (1853), pp 118-27 "The Political Memento" is explained in Scott's letter to Morritt of 9th July 1814, Vol III, p 459

which was calculated to bring the world back to all the ignorance and ferocity of the darker ages without the spirit of high honour and chivalry by which their ignorance was gilded and their tempers softened I trusted that as an orator of my own country said upon a different occasion, "there would be a ram caught in the thicket" substituted for the dreadful sacrifice which seemed to be demanded from us, and that without being reduced to a second state of barbarism we might by submitting to temporary burthens and persevering in manly resistance we should at length see other nations light up their flame at our unquenched altar Besides I always trusted that according to the course of history and experience Res nolunt diu male administrari and that a system so violent and unnatural as that of Bonaparte must finally recoil upon its inventor providing he did not find his strength in our weakness

Your work, Sir, has set this in a point of view equally brilliant and irresistible He who runs may read, and the world is much obliged for the striking contrast which you have placed before their eyes I have long wished to see this fairly done, and I am both as one of the public and as an obliged individual very much, Dear Sir, your obliged humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 21 *June* 1814

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO THE REVD JOSEPH COOK,<sup>1</sup> NEWTON HALL  
[NORTHUMBERLAND]

[Copy]

SIR,—I have done great Injustice to my own feelings in lying so long under the appearance of Ingratitude for

<sup>1</sup> Joseph Cook (1759-1844), of Newton Hall, Northumberland, vicar of Chatton and Shilbottle in the same county His eldest son was Samuel Edward Widdrington (*d* 1856), a writer on Spain, for whom see *DNB* Evidently Cook has sent Scott his *Memorandum relative to a Curious Stone Coffin, lately found near Chillingham in Northumberland MS sm 4to* (1814) See *4 LC p 32*

your very curious and highly acceptable Present The only reason I can give for being so very long in acknowledging your favor is, that I have been much pressed by the necessity of getting rid of an Edition of Swifts Works, and that I wished to look into a Book or two before writing to you, which might throw some light upon the subject of the Tomb The Douglasses and indeed Bruce himself was so frequently a visitor of Northumberland during the Reign of Edw II and beginning of Edwd III that I think your Conjecture highly probable I looked in Barbours Metrical History of the Bruce with some slight hope of finding traces of the slaughtered Warrior, but I have not, as yet, been successful I have only to add should you again visit Tweeddale it would give me great pleasure to have the satisfaction of seeing you at Abbotsford and expressing myself personally, Sir, very much your obliged Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH *July 7, 1814*

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

To [WILLIAM JERDAN]

SIR,—I ought long ago to have acknowledged the honor you did me in sending me a copy of the Account of the Island of Elba <sup>1</sup> so interesting from its present inhabitant I beg you to believe that this has neither been owing to want of sense of your kindness nor to my failing to put a due value upon your interesting work But I have been long absent upon a pleasure excursion <sup>2</sup> and upon my return had many blanks in my correspondence to make up most of which still burthen my conscience I should however be unpardonable should I pass over any longer

<sup>1</sup> Arsenne Thiebaut de Berneaud's *A Voyage to the Isle of Elba, etc Translated by W Jerdan* (1814) See *ALC* p 319

<sup>2</sup> This word has been written thus in another hand over a torn part of the MS The excursion was with the Light House Commissioners to the Hebrides See Vol III, pp 481 93, and letters to Charlotte in 1814, present volume, pp 117 to 133

the kindness of the son of an early acquaintance of my own & an old school companion of my father & uncle <sup>1</sup> I had often the pleasure of seeing Mr Jerdan at my late Uncle's house near Kelso though you are probably too young to remember me as a resident in the neighbourhood Kelso or rather the recollection of the friends I once had there forms an interesting æra in my life and though almost all of these have been dispersed or removed in a very short number of years I never can think of it without deep interest & am particularly flattered by any token of kindness and attention from those who are like me connected with [that] beautiful village Believe me [*illegible*] Sir upon many accounts Very much your obliged humble Servt  
WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 2 November 1814

[*Lib Hist Soc of Pennsylvania*]

TO RICHARD LOVELL EDGEWORTH, EDGEWORTHSTOWN <sup>2</sup>  
[IRELAND]

MY DEAR SIR,—I am very happy that the Lord of the Isles gave your family amusement such as he is and I

<sup>1</sup> "Mr Scott's intimacy with the family continued for a number of years whenever he visited this part of the country [i.e. the Kelso neighbourhood], and there was even an early flirtation between him and my eldest sister, who did not like the 'lame laddie' But a more interesting proof of intimate acquaintance than boy and girl fancies, whether real or conjectural, is contained in a letter from the mighty minstrel to myself, in recommending his son Charles to my cicerone attentions when he came to London, in which he tells me that my father was 'the first person who encouraged *his* love of poetry' My father, indeed, in his limited provincial sphere, stood almost alone for a genuine and cultivated taste for literature"—*The Autobiography of William Jerdan*, 1 (1852), p. 12

<sup>2</sup> 'Edgeworthstown' has been scored out and '15 Baggot St Dublin' written as the address For R. L. Edgeworth see Vol. II, p. 510 and note The day before the above letter was written, 17th February, Scott had replied to Maria on hearing she had received *The Lord of the Isles* See Vol. IV, p. 29 Here Scott replies to her father's remarks on the poem which he had added to Maria's letter of 4th February The Edgeworth family think the whole work is far more perfect than *The Lay* 'That the story is interesting the absorbed attention of our large circle, which kept them from nine o'clock at night till two in the morning from particular

heartily wish he had been more worth your acceptance and friendly construction. But the book printed is like the hour that flies we cannot recall it and have only the recollection of its having been pleasant or stupid as it went by. You honour me much in supposing that my attempts can be any encouragement to those of Miss Edgeworth. I have very often thought that popular applause was in some degree like what economists tell us of the price of corn which although altogether disproportioned from year to year does upon the average of a century prove the most true gauge of the relative value of commodities or land. It is impossible I should conceive that such a general glow of admiration as has been thrown around Miss Edgeworth by her numerous and varied performances could have continued to gild any individual that was not possessed of talents the most superior and genius the most transcendent. But then though I agree with the public in the general justice of their opinion I am far from binding myself to abide by their decision as to the different degrees of applause which they confer on different performances. The circumstances which influence that sort of preference are so various and have so little to do with the real merit of the work and there are I think peculiar crisis's in which the most popular author must prepare for receiving less of the popular favour than he may have attained in instances where his labour really had less merit. Above all such an author finds the most powerful rival in his own previous popularity. The ques-

criticism intent upon the general effect, has perfectly convinced me." After mentioning one or two points which he thinks might have been better, he goes on "It [the poem] has revived my daughters failing courage, and has convinced her that an author may overcome by subsequent exertion the effect of hasty, unreasonable prejudice. She has found that the last production of a man of real abilities may be allowed to be superior to his former writings, and that the success of one performance need not necessarily dazzle the public eye so as to prevent it from seeing the beauties of his subsequent productions. I thought & so did many of our friends think, that 'Ennui' was the best of Marias fashionable tales—she therefore imagined that she could never afterwards write any thing so well. You have taught her to think otherwise' —*Walpole Collection*

tion with most readers is not what the new work is in itself but what rank it must hold with reference to other & former publications by the same author. That it cannot in point of style and structure have all the novelty of surprise is sufficiently evident and it is very probable that the author in dread of repeating himself has been forced upon subjects or modes of treating them less congenial to his genius & less natural in themselves. The very expectation which is excited by the new work of an author of acknowledged superiority tells in general against him. Many will form to themselves some idea beforehand of the story and they are disappointed when they take up the real tale not because it is deficient in merit but because it disappoints pre-conceptions which they have no right whatever to have formed. In short it is a rock of ice & not of adamant and therefore we must not be surprised if we slip now & then a little back in attempting to climb it. In my opinion the *Absentee* dans le meme genre fully equald if it did not exceed the *Onwe*<sup>1</sup> and many passages of *Patronage* possess an interest more profound than either though as a whole the union of so many stories as were necessary to elucidate the important subject which Miss E. had chosen may injure in some slight degree the interest so far as it depends upon continuity of incident. Yet to me there seems no deficiency of this kind on the contrary the various scenes which display such knowledge both of human life & human nature are connected with the most wonderful address and remind us necessarily of the skill of the same author who sketched the little tale of "Waste not want not" in which the moral is so naturally yet so forcibly elucidated by a natural chain of circumstances. I trust upon the whole that Miss Edgeworth will continue to instruct and delight the present generation for I would venture my head that the next will see no living artist to rival the performances she has bequeathed

<sup>1</sup> Scott's facetious spelling of 'Ennuï' (1809) as pronounced in French. It was the first of Maria's *Tales of Fashionable Life*.

them and it is then when having no longer any temptation to compare her various pieces with each other they must be necessarily estimated by a parallel between them & the works of inferior hands that their real and undeniable excellence will be seen in its extent & brilliancy

Here is a long stupid epistle on a very interesting subject I must now go get a frank for it or it will cost more than it is worth It is some apology that it is written amid a complication of sounds such as assailed Mr Temple at Lord Oldboroughs levee<sup>1</sup>—Not quite so politically important but fully equal in their teasing & stunning variety & continuity Wh[er]ever I happen to be believe me dear Sir Very much your obliged humble Servant

EDINR 18 feby 1815

WALTER SCOTT

A direction to Edinburgh always finds me whether I am in town or country

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO LORD BYRON

MY DEAR LORD,—We are at present guests with some old friends from whom I cannot easily disengage myself so soon as tomorrow evening But I am much more desirous to see *you* than Kean or Garrick if he could be called to life again Murray tells me you are to be in his shop by three o'clock when I hope to have the pleasure I have long wished [for] of making your personal acquaintance<sup>2</sup> I beg your Lordship to accept (though a late)

<sup>1</sup> See Maria Edgeworth's *Patronage*, chap xxxi Mr Temple was Lord Oldborough's secretary

<sup>2</sup> See letter from Paris to Joanna Baillie, c 6th September 1815—"I will endeavour to see you and Lord Byron or both in passing through London," Vol IV, p 96 "Scott took me with him to call on Lord Byron, whom we did not find at home, and after a short visit to his lady, proceeded by her direction to Albemarle Street, in hopes of finding him at Mr Murray's, in this however we were disappointed" —John Scott of Gala, *Journal to Paris* (1842), p 240 But Byron came to dine with them at Long's Hotel, Bond Street, where, on the occasion, Mathews and Terry were present "Scott and Byron parted, and it was for the last time, evidently with much



a most sincere congratulation upon your late change of condition I am with much respect and regard your Lordship's most faithful and obliged

WALTER SCOTT

CORNER WHITE HORSE STREET PICADILLY

Friday [Wednesday, 13th September, 1815]

[Pierpont Morgan]

To JAMES HOGG <sup>1</sup>

DEAR HOGG,—The enclosed verses are I think very pretty, more like Tom Warton than my attempts I should suppose—to attempt to add to them would only spoil them and to tell you a secret my pipes are not in tune just now I would only remark that as the author does me the honour to assume my person that I am pretty generally known rather to be a favourer of Dundee though not a friend to the earlier exploits so that the allusion to him on the 35 page is not quite in character The verses are really very good and I think the author might say as a celebrated Empiric did at the bottom [of his] advertisements “NB I am not the Doctor John Fothergill of London but much his superior” I am as unwell with a

feeling of mutual regard, etc —*op cit* p 244 See also Scott's *Journal*, 21st December 1825—“I never saw Byron so full of fun, frolic, wit and whim he was as playful as a kitten” Byron had married Anne Isabella Milbanke on 2nd January of this year Scott and Gala left London for the North on Thursday, 14th September Scott had made Byron's “personal acquaintance” during his earlier visit this year Why he speaks in this formal way now we do not understand, unless he previously met him only in society gatherings, and looks forward to a more intimate acquaintance

<sup>1</sup> This letter is pasted into a copy of Hogg's *The Poetic Mirror* (1816) in Yale University Library Hogg's volume contains “Epistle to Mr R S\*\*\*\*”, in which (p 35) Scott is made to speak of the Covenanters as ‘injured Scotland's patriot band’ and to add

“There, worthy of his masters, came  
The despot's champion, bloody Graham, etc”

“The *Epistle to Mr R—S—* was not Hogg's and according to him was not intended as an imitation of Scott, which however it is”—Edith C Batho *The Ettrick Shepherd* (1927) p 82

headache as I can be and to cure [it] must go to dine  
with a ranting highlandman Yours truly

[1816]

W S

[*Yale Univ Lib*]

A MONS BRIQUET LE FILS, QUAI DE L'HORLOGE, PARIS

DEAR SIR,—The Bearer Mr John Ballantyne is a gentleman connected with the Book trade in which I have long had occasion to be acquainted with him as a person of honour & character He proposes to visit Paris with some view to commerce and as he is an entire stranger perhaps you would have the goodness to give him a little of your advice and if you could bestow half an hour upon him for that purpose I would account it a particular favour He is brother of an eminent Scottish printer (our Bodoni) who has printed a great deal for me

In the couse of a fortnight we expect Mrs Nicolson and Miss Dumergue on a visit to our land of lakes & mountains So you see our friends get quite gay one autumn in Paris & another in Scotland I beg my respects to your father and Miss Briquet and am very much

EDINBURGH 8 *July* 1816

Mr Ballantyne est en Paris a la Grand Hotel de Tours  
rue Notre Dame des Victoires

[*Unsigned*]

[*Pierpont Morgan*]

TO J W CROKER

I send Murray a review <sup>1</sup> of Lord Byron I have treated him with the respect his abilities claim, and the sort of attachment which I really feel for his person But d—— his morals and his politics <sup>1</sup> What a goodly vessel have they combined to wreck

10th *January* 1817

[*Croker Papers*]

<sup>1</sup> The review of the third canto of *Childe Harold* for *The Quarterly Review*  
See letters of same date to Murray and Croker, Vol IV, pp 363 66

To HECTOR MACDONALD BUCHANAN

[Facsimile]

MY DEAR HECTOR,—A particular freind of mine Mr Washington Irving from New York makes a tour of the Highlands with Mr Preston<sup>1</sup> a freind of his—if he should find you at Ross may I beg for them the hospitality of the Priory & in return you may draw on me in favour of any of your freinds coming our way & put this trouble in accompt between our two lions Loch Lomond Crer<sup>2</sup> to Melrose Abbey I hope you intend to come here yourself when on duty you can easily start for a day or two as Brother David will be a fixture

Kind love to Mrs Buchanan & the nephews & neices  
Affectionately yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 1st Sept [1817]

[*Hellman's Washington Irving*]

To JOHN BALLANTYNE

To be copied for Messrs Longmans

SIR,—On the part of the author of the works to which you refer and in answer to an enclosure from Messrs Longman & Co/ I beg to recall to your memory for their

<sup>1</sup> William Campbell Preston (1794-1860), U S senator When he came to Europe in 1817 he studied law at Edinburgh with Hugh Swinton Legare (1797-1843), the American lawyer, who became attorney general in 1841 under President Tyler Scott's letter is reproduced in facsimile in *Hellman's Washington Irving* (1925) at p 100 From Hawick on 23rd September Washington Irving expresses regret that he has not been able before leaving Scotland to see Scott once more He had hoped to meet him at Jedburgh, but he was detained there "My tour in the Highlands was delightful Mr MacDonald Buchanan was not at home when we came down Loch Lomond so that I did not call at Ross Priory, but I had the satisfaction of meeting him at Mr Jeffreys a few days since I cannot but express my satisfaction, on calling at your house yesterday, at being welcomed by my old friend Hamlet" — *Walpole Collection* Hamlet, of course, is Scott's dog

<sup>2</sup> e Creditor "Brother David" is probably David Dundas

information the circumstances attending the whole affair <sup>1</sup> You cannot have forgotten that I commissioned you on your return through Londn to talk over the conditions of a bargain with Messrs L & Co/ under the express stipulation that you were to come to no conclusion *without my express sanction* The letters you sent to me are now before me The first acquaints me that the propositions could not be entertaind during M<sup>r</sup> Rees's absence & gave me no hope of any settlement whatever being agreed upon As the concern was too material to allow its being postponed it was immediately communicated to Mr Constable as a matter in which his interest was to be considered as well as that of Messrs L —and I wrote to you that such a communication had taken place & that it would be now probably unnecessary to treat with Messrs Longn as Leaders of the concern Before my letter reachd I had a second from you intimating some propositions To one of the most important of these I intimated by return of post my decided determination never to accede and certainly considered the bargain as entirely broken off and in consequence enterd into a new engagement with Messrs Constable reserving however to Messrs Longman the same interest which Mr Constable was to have had in case of Messrs Longman being managers It is clear from these circumstances that I cannot be bound by the act of an agent who exceeded his commission & that I must be bound by an engagement enterd into with my own deliberate approbation Were it possible that you could have voluntarily enterd into a bargain the tenor of which I *expressly & instantly disapproved* it may for ought I know be a question betwixt you & Messrs Longmn but cannot affect my bargain with Messrs Constable The

<sup>1</sup> This letter is another contribution to the negotiation with Messrs Longman & Co over the second series of *Tales of My Landlord*, for other letters on which see those to John Ballantyne, Vol I, Appendix, pp 516 20, and to James Ballantyne, Vol IV, pp 507 8, 510 12, 518 This letter was probably written on the same day as, or just after, that on pp 510 12, i e 14th September, 1817

proposal was well meant to Messrs Longman & would have been the foundation of a bargain had they found themselves at liberty to accept it without modification or reference to an absent member of their concern, and I suppose it can hardly be thought that you were actuated by any motive save a wish to oblige them which led you to use stronger terms than my commission authorized you to do. I have always entertained a high respect for this house but I must beg to be excused from deferring to any one when to do so would be to acknowledge myself guilty of double-dealing or a breach of bargain. After all the whole matter in dispute is the right of management with the over-copies minus the expence of advertising and while I differ from them respecting the effect of the jotting with which you furnished them I cannot allow that even were their interpretation just it can make the slightest difference as to the author who gave no authority for such a bargain & disapproved of it by return of post so soon as it was communicated

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DEAR JOHN,—I think the above will close the matter with Longman one way or other. If as they now say they declined to take the concern burdend with the stock on the terms proposed what was it “in which they were to meet the author’s wishes”<sup>1</sup> when Rees came to Edinr. I wish you had been more cautious with these gentry but I cannot conceive your memoranda can make an agreement binding on any one certainly not on the author. It must depend on their reply whether they are to be continued in the other works or no. I own I think their present conduct perfectly captious & unreasonable yet perhaps it may be unnecessary to make an absolute breach.

I inclose James’s two notes accepted. The account of Waverley seems unexceptionable. You do not say what

<sup>1</sup> Both here and at the end of the letter we have supplied the concluding inverted commas which, in each case, Scott has omitted to insert

reply Longmans house made to the arrangement in that work & in Guy M I am obliged to write short having been severely attacked by the cramp last night & feeling still giddy & sick Upon the £167,, pray stop £10,, as commission for your own trouble of negociation I subjoin a postscript to be added to the letter to Longman  
Yours truly W S

“I must do you the common justice to add that in all your correspondence with me you never stated yourself as having taken it on you to engage in any bargain but merely as havirg stated preliminaries *to be considerd & approved or rejected by me at pleasure* It is impossible to reconcile this conduct with any idea on your part that you were closing an important transaction without the concurrence of the party principally interested or his confidential agent ”

[September 1817]

[Nat Lib Scot ]

TO FRANCIS DOUCE

DEAR SIR,—You had the goodness to transmit me a work of the Abbe de la Rue <sup>1</sup> now lying for me I understand at my house in Edinburgh Permit me to avail myself of your good offices in returning the enclosed acknowledge-

<sup>1</sup> L'Abbe Gervais Delarue (1751-1835), the French ecclesiastic and writer. He took refuge in England during the French Revolution, and transcribed from precious documents in London. His chief work is *Essais historiques sur les Bardes, les Jongleurs et les Trouveres normands et anglo normands*, 3 vols (1834). From Caen on 16th August 1817 the Abbe had thus written ‘ Si la distance des lieux nous separe, le gout des mêmes études—doit nous rapprocher Vos jolis Romans de Tristan et de la Dame du Lac m ont fait le plus grand plaisir, et en attendant que je puisse vous envoyer mon *histoire des Trouveres normands et Anglo normands* que je suis prêt de publier, permettez que je vous passe hommage de mes Recherches sur les poètes de la Bretagne Armoricaïne dans le moyen âge Les vieux Bardes et ceux de votre pays de Galles, furent les 1ers chantres de nos contrées occidentales et les 1ers romanciers de la table ronde A qui donc, plus qu'à vous, monsieur, dois je communiquer les titres de leur gloire littéraire, quand vous avez fait revivre d'une manière si brillante plusieurs de leurs ouvrages ? Recevez etc ”—*Walpole Collection*

ment of his politeness as I am other wise uncertain how to send it safely At the same time my dear Sir receive my best wishes for your health & happiness I trust you feel yourself able to hold constant communication with that valu[able] collection of curious books of which no one knows to make a more interesting use My own literary amusements have given way in some measure to a more active & out of doors course of life & attention to rural matters have disturbed most of my sedentary habits This has not happened entirely from choice but in consequence of severe spasmodic affections in the stomach to which long labour at the desk is rather unfavourable May you my dear & honoured Sir be long a stranger to whatever can disturb your studies & believe me ever Your most obliged Servt

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD BY MELROSE

10 November [1817]

[*Bodleian Quarterly Record*]

To JOHN BALLANTYNE

DEAR JOHN,—I heartily wish you had written me before answering Longmans last letter I wrote you explicitly that the Chequer was closed<sup>1</sup> as to the Tales & I have written so to Constable Longman & Co/ have declined them repeatedly and I cannot conceive why the matter should be subject to any further discussion & what their business is about the terms of a bargain in which they have explicitly & somewhat angrily declined a share In one word I look to Constable *alone* for settlement as to the Tales There is no use in cramming them down these gentlemens throats

On the other hand I dont see any use in turning them out of the other novels I put this to you as a question

<sup>1</sup> See letter to John Ballantyne, 8th or 9th November, and one to Constable, 10th November, Vol V, pp 10, 12 13 respectively

whether their interest should be continued in these novels & gave my own opinion in the affirmative Pray write to them again & use the following words

<sup>1</sup> "Since mine of the 11th I have the following communication on the subject of my letter On the subject of the Tales I again beg leave to say that in consequence of Messrs Longman & Co/ declining repeatedly the share which (with kind intentions at least) was reserved for them in the bargain with Messrs Constable the whole concern is disposed of to Messrs Constable If they can accomodate matters with that house to their mutual satisfaction I shall be well pleased but it is an affair in which I can take no concern (As to the other novels I see no reason for depriving Messrs Longmans house of their interest in them nor do I see why they may not retain the one though they have declined the other bargain unless indeed they should be disposed to something different from an amicable settlement in which case present & future connection of all kind will necessarily be broken off) I desire you will immediately intimate this to Messrs Longman & let me be no further troubled in this matter "

I own I am much surprized at your wishing to forc[e] the Tales on them when I told you distinctly to act with Caddell & Constable & as for depriving them of the other novels what good end is gained by it? Suppose they should say in answer to your very imprudent letter of the 11th <sup>1</sup> "Well we will do as you desire we will take the Tales novels & all as one transaction" Why the result is that I have not the Tales to give them I really wish you would think before you write for you have been in a terrible hurry first by making proposals inconsistent with those I expressly gave you & now by opening up a matter which was effectually closed

I really have not time to trouble my head about Black-

<sup>1</sup> We supply this first set of inverted commas which Scott has omitted in both passages of quoted expression



wood & his squabbles otherwise I would have thanked you for the key to his article <sup>1</sup>

It is very unpleasant for me to think that amid all this procrastinated splutter betwixt Longman & Constable the payment of my bond may be postponed I would give a good deal to hear that it was chalkd off I am very truly yours

W SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 14 Novr 1817

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO JOHN MURRAY

DEAR SIR,—I reinclose the sheets which have been delayd by my being at Abbotsford for a start during this delightful weather I will get forward the Harold <sup>2</sup> as soon as I can but these dreadful things Elections confound everything & everybody—although my chief connection with them is the round of visiting which the arrival of Lord Mellville & other old friends engages me in I cannot profit by your magnificent offer for Chalmers Queen Mary although I should like the task very much But I could not do it unless I were among my books & from 12 July to 12 November I trust to be at Abbotsford where there are neither books nor room for them I like Freres Whistlecraft so much that I believe I shall think of moulding<sup>3</sup> it with Roses similar work Beppo I shall not meddle with for various reasons I am very glad Evelyn is in Southeys hands—it cannot be in better

I am much pleased with the last number The article on the Poors laws is wholesome good doctrine and nothing short of it will cure that wasting canker of the state But it will make a convulsion for the time and that I fear ministers will not be bold enough to face I inclose a few

<sup>1</sup> The Chaldean article in *Blackwood's Magazine* See Vol V, p 6

<sup>2</sup> i.e. the review of *Childe Harold* for *The Quarterly* See Vol V, p 169 and note 1

<sup>3</sup> Evidently he means “mixing”

lines to Gifford Also a letter which I will be obliged to you to drop into the 2d bag Yours truly

EDINR 16 June 1818

W SCOTT

[*Moscow State Hist Mus*]

TO SIR SAMUEL TOLLER<sup>1</sup>

[Extract]

private & Confidential

SIR,—The assurances of my kind and much respected friend the Lord Chief Commissioner for the court of Jury trial in Scotland induce me to break through all the usual forms and charge you at once with a delicate & perhaps a troublesome piece of business on the part of a perfect stranger If however to be known to the Strange family<sup>2</sup>—to be very intimate with Lord Melville—to be acquainted with the Marquis of Hastings and some other persons immediately connected with India could propitiate you in my favour I could have easily obtained their sanction for my present application But those who know our kind & mutual friend the Lord Chief Commissioner will scarce think any recommendation however respectable will add weight to his His letter will explain why I have had the boldness to send you a power of attorney to act as your judgement may dictate in behalf of four young persons my children who under the will of their uncle by the mother's side Charles Carpenter Esquire late Commercial Resident at Salem are heirs to his fortune in Britain & in India after the death of his widow to whom he has (most properly) bequeathed the life-rent of his property

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol VI, p 12, note 3, with the letter to Sir John Macpherson, 10th November 1819—"My Children's affairs are in the hands of Sir Samuel Toller, Judge Advocate of Madras, etc."

<sup>2</sup> Sir Thomas Andrew Lumisden Strange (1756 1841) had resigned his post as Chief Justice of Madras on 7th June, 1817 The Marquis of Hastings is Francis Rawdon Hastings (1754 1826), first Marquis of Hastings He was Governor General of Bengal 1813 22, and established British supremacy in Central India 1817 18

It becomes necessary Sir that I should write to a gentleman I have never seen with the full confidence of an old & proved friend and without hesitation I proceed to do so

My wife is her brothers only surviving relation—they parted in early youth never to meet again—their intercourse was however regular and most affectionate on both parts I never saw my brother in law but I have no reason to suppose my alliance was disagreeable to him but much the contrary I am a stranger to the family into which he married only I know they are highly respectable I inclose a copy of Mr Carpenters will naming his widow liferentrix and she executrix and settling his property on my children in default of his own—he died childless

I inclose an extract of a letter from Mr Josiah Marshal Heath who is married to a sister of Mrs Carpenter and acts as her attorney in these matters I only say upon this subject that his idea of the funds here is exaggerated By the report of Mr Carpenters confidential agent Mr Stephen Nicolson Barber the property here amounts to

£24,844,, 14,, 4—3 per Cent Consols remitted by Mr Carpenter upon his marriage & purchased for about 54 per cent

£13,881,, 4 per Cent arising chiefly from dividends invested from time to time interest being added to principal Worth both together about £30,000 as the funds are

Mr Carpenter does not appear to have made any considerable addition to these European funds by remittances from India but on this point my present information is general

Mr Heath writes me that the Indian funds (all debts paid) may nett £6000 or £7000 About three weeks later he writes to Mr Barber there may be a balance of £8000 or £10000 in favour of the estate I am aware my brother in law practiced hospitality in a great extent and that his family was very expensive But I know he wrote to me long since inquiring how £3000 a year would

answer in this country & I think it strange that he should have toiled so very long in a situation supposed to be lucrative without making more than from £7000 to £10000, in seven or eight years. He wrote to his sister a letter received about two months since mentioning his positive intention of arranging his affairs & returning to Britain for life. I am at a loss to think how he could have proposed this on £2000 a year. I must add that the report of gentlemen writing from India to their friends here estimate his fortune at about £70,000. And I have reason to think that gentlemen in the civil service in India can form with considerable accuracy some thing like a general guess at the fortunes of each other.

These circumstances Sir I state frankly as they weigh on my own mind. They are not however such as ought to infer anything like an unhandsome prejudice against my sister in law or Mr Heath & if either the letter to me or that of a much later date to Mr Barber had given any thing like a general view of the funds in India you would have been spared this trouble. For I am aware that property in this state is exaggerated by report and that the other circumstances I have mentioned may be all capable of the most perfect explanation. Mr Carpenter in speaking of £3000 a year may have announced his hopes rather than his certainties—a man who lives expensively cannot save much—and one who winds up his own extensive commerce may reasonably hope to make more of it than a stranger. It is possible also that as Mr Heaths estimate has risen from £6000 to £10,000 it may ascend higher as he becomes more completely acquainted with my brothers transactions. Still it is my duty as acting for my children to obtain the opinion of some impartial person on a subject so important—it will free me to my own mind and ought to be (as doubtless it will be) pleasant for Mr Heath himself. I am sure I should think so in his case. And apart from all these circumstances Mrs Carpenters health is stated to be very delicate.

which makes it of itself adviseable that my children should have an attorney in India with full powers in case of the Executrix's inability to act or her demise before the affairs are wound up

I must however add that I have not the least wish to hurt Mrs Carpenters feelings or embarrass her management by any unnecessary interference I have written to Mr Heath in answer to a passage, in which he presumes it will be unnecessary to precipitate the disposal of the house &c while Mrs Carpenter remains in India, that far from wishing this, my children (who are on point of feeling old enough to think for themselves & I hope have from nature & education the disposition to think rightly) earnestly wish Mrs Carpenters wishes & convenience to be consulted as the primary object in all these matters It is not their wish or God knows mine to make the utmost penny of this large succession at the expence of what is better worth than the whole of it is—I mean fair & liberal principle As their uncle has made them in place of his children they owe Mrs Carpenter all the deference & respectful attention that is due to a mother I said on their part that I hoped she would retain without scruple such personalities as plate, books & so forth only begging for my wife a seal or ring of her brothers & for myself his arms if he had any or any skins or Indian curiosities which she might not incline to keep or give away to his friends I clogg'd my renunciation with these trifling requests only to show it was quite sincere and this commission with which you are like to be burthend has no regard to such small objects

In regard to the management I am aware it is impossible to interfere very effectually without having recourse to measures which I cannot suppose necessary But the opportunity of inspection and perhaps of advice will not I am sure be denied to a gentleman of your high situation & character acting on the part of minors I have only to add that any part of the trouble which can be effi-

ciently devolved upon any official person I intreat you will commit to the charge of whomsoever you may approve and act in the whole matter as your experience & delicacy shall suggest It is little to say that every attendant expence will be cheerfully satisfied I wish I could add that any thing was in my power that could mark my feeling of the favour [on] which I am very boldly reckoning but I will eagerly embrace any opportunity that may occur to make manifest at least my sense of the obligation

I have the honour to subscribe myself Sir your most obedient humble Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH 9 *December* 1818

I am happy to say that the health of our mutual friend the Lord Commissioner which was indifferent during the summer is now greatly restored

[*Nat Mus of Scot Antiqs*]

TO WILLIAM LAIDLAW

Mr Cooke will please forward this to Kaeside on its arrival at Melrose

MY DEAR MR LAIDLAW,—I received your letter this morning mentioning that Johnstone the ploughman had received with impertinence your directions concerning his work & told you that you were not his master I beg that on receiving this letter you will read it to him in presence of Tom Purdie and any other sensible witness

Johnstone and every other labourer at Abbotsford is to understand that I do not manage my farm myself but that it is entirely under your superintendence and that they are in all respects to look up to you and obey your directions as their Master He will therefore say in one word and that a civil one whether it is his intention to render you this obedience or no If he refuses to do so you will dismiss him on the spot with the assurance that

I will not pay him a penny of wages unless the Law of the country obliges me to do so

And as he knows perfectly well that the care of my farm labour is delegated to you and that I never open my lips to any servant on the subject you will even in case of his promising obedience give him warning that he is to leave the service at Whitsunday It is obvious to common sense that I cannot be subjected to the greatest risque both of loss and inconvenience if your orders are to be disobeyd so long as they relate to my lawful service I am Dear Mr Laidlaw Yours etc

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 10 *January* 1819

[*Ballantyne*]

TO JOHN BALLANTYNE

DEAR JOHN,—I had your letter yesterday and took a few hours to think of its contents Messrs Constable's request is in every respect inconvenient and it is I see quite impossible for James or you to do any thing in it At the same time it is to be considered that we are at present asking them for a heavy advance on I[vanho]e before publication & perhaps can with no very good grace refuse them this favour in return The substantiability<sup>1</sup> of the house I cannot question yet it seems odd that under all circumstances they should have chosen this time to ask such a favour when they must be aware that the M[onaster]y was given to London merely or chiefly on account of the more easy transference of the London Co/s bills Such requests as the present are like to make one wish they had adopted this measure in other cases

Supposing the only question to be whether the £1000 can be renewd for them aye or no I can only see one way of doing it—vizt

We reckond on getting £1500<sub>0</sub> from Cowan But if by

<sup>1</sup> Erroneous for "substantiality" See *NED* for other examples

your extraordinary exertions you get the whole £1100 & odd bills discounted we shall only need £1000 from Cowans for ourselves & probably they will willingly take Constables bills for the remaining £500. The remaining £500 might I think be easily discounted on two bills bearing my name Of all this you will judge & communicate with Constable taking care however to secure all our own matters before we can enter upon his If you find this plan will not answer, our reply must be that after trying all points we cannot during this month do what he desires To make an effort will at least show our wish to oblige them even to the utmost verge of our convenience But do not hurt yourself at any rate

If we do get this £1000 discounted for him I will draw on him for an equal sum to aid myself in paying my £1500 which will be better than pledging the companys name or yours for that whole sum though as the bills will go to London it does not much matter I beg you will make them understand this for I do not look on this £1000 in any other light than as an accomodation bill which for the further convenience of Messrs Constable we get discounted for them & have a right to counter-bills either in security or for our own use <sup>1</sup>

You do not mention your own health I beg you will avoid damp while you take calomel which might be fatal You tell me James is out dining and he complains of wind & bowels I suppose that you mention [the] cause & the effect which will render both letters logical I wish you wd put him in mind of my Whisky for I am nearly out Yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 30 *Sept*r [PM 1819]

[*Nat Lib Scot* ]

<sup>1</sup> For other discussions on this see letters to John Ballantyne in August 1819, Vol V pp 454-65 *passim*



To [UNKNOWN CORRESPONDENT] <sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR SIR,—I have taken the liberty to send to you for the Collection of H R [H ] the P R in case you should approve of it a periodical work which has made much noise here The writers are young men of station and character the principal are understood to be J G Lockhart (supposed Author of Peters letters) & Mr John Wilson the Poet both considered as men of great talent There is much satire in the work which applies chiefly to the meridian of this place but there are also many articles both of a general nature & an original description I take the liberty further to point out that the undertaking has been carried on with a markd purpose of supporting and defending the great constitutional truths which are now so generally the subjects of attack and to solicit your attention to an article in the last number termed the Warder which I believe is the first of a series of letters intended to appear on the subject I hope in pointing out this work to your observation I have not exceeded the bounds you had the goodness to assign me respecting new publications &c &c &c

[November—December 1819]

[*Unsigned*]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

To THE MARCHIONESS OF HUNTLY <sup>2</sup>

MADAM,—The family misfortune which I have recently sustained in the loss of an excellent mother though at the most advanced period of human life will I hope be received by your goodness as an apology for not sooner acknowledging the packet with which I was last week honoured

The tune of the Baron of Brackley sounds to my ear

<sup>1</sup> This letter is probably addressed to Sir William Knighton or another one of the Prince Regent's household, sending him *Blackwood's Magazine* The 'Warder' articles appeared in *Blackwood*, vols vi and vii, from November 1819 to April 1820

Catherine, second daughter of Sir Charles Cope, Bart She married George, ninth Marquess of Huntly in 1791 She died in 1832

fectly original and very beautiful My daughters who  
derstand a little of Scottish music practise it already  
h some effect The words correspond very much with  
se which from imperfect recollection I gave to Mr  
bert Jamieson who in the year 1806 publishd a collec-  
n of Ballads in two volumes But the printed copy  
ght be much improved by selecting the best verses  
m those with which your Ladyship has obliged me I  
s very sorry for the poor man who was so unmercifully  
*nded* out by his false lady

n the same collection of Jamieson there is an imperfect  
torical ballad relating to a feud between the Huntly  
uly and the McIntoshes of which I have heard the late  
chess of Gordon repeat a verse or two

As I came down by Fiddoch side  
In a may morning  
I met Willie MacIntosh  
An hour before the dawning

“ Turn again turn again  
Turn again I bid ye  
If you burn Achindoun  
Huntley will head ye ”—

“ Head me hang me  
That shall never fear me  
Ill burn Achindoun  
Before the life leaves me ”

As I came down by Fiddoch side  
In a may morning  
Auchindoun was a’ in blaze  
A day before the dawning

haps this fragment may be so far interesting to your  
dyship from the subject that in your researches after  
ottish song of which you are so distinguished a patroness  
i may add it to your collection

’ermit me to add that if I knew that my family were  
sessed of any songs or tunes which could be agreeable

to your Ladyship it would give us extreme pleasure to send them to Kinrara <sup>1</sup>

I presume to offer my respects to the Marquis of Huntley though it has so happened that I have never had the good fortune to meet him But many of my friends and in particular the late Duke of Buccleuch were so much attachd to his Lordship that I feel as if half acquainted with him

But I shall make your Ladyship repent of your courtesy if I inflict upon you a longer letter

I have the honour to be with sincere respect The Marchioness of Huntleys much obliged & most obedient  
Servant

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH

2d January 1819 [1820]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLES JOSEPH HARFORD,<sup>2</sup> STAPLETON, NEAR  
BRISTOL

SIR,—I am honoured with your very obliging communication I can easily understand how General

<sup>1</sup> A lodge between Loch Alvie and the Spey in Badenoch, Inverness shire It was the summer residence of the famous Duchess of Gordon

Presumably Charles Joseph Harford of Stapleton, M A , F S A , son of Joseph Harford of Stapleton and Hannah, daughter of Joseph Hill See Burke's *Hist of the Commoners, etc*, iv (1838), p 639 He is evidently related to John Scandrett Harford of Falcondale and Blaise Castle, Bristol, for whom see our Vol VIII p 217 and note 1 In an undated letter Harford refers to a visit he has made to the scene (St Robert's Cave near Knaresborough) of Eugene Aram's murder mentioned in Note XIII to Canto II of *Rokeby* While sketching a small Gothic door, Harford had asked a General Popham, who was looking on, if that was the Door by which the Midwife was admitted No said he in a strong manner not *That*, convincing me it was at some other (See *Rokeby*, Note 3 G Littlecote Hall) The memory of Mrs Leahey recorded in note VII of II<sup>d</sup> Canto still remains at Minehead and her Ghost is heard on the Pier in a storm calling for a Boat For the notes cited by Harford see *Rokeby*, first ed (1813), pp xxxi m, xviii Harford wonders if Scott can tell him from whom Massinger took the Plott of his fine but hurried and indecent Play of the Unnatural Combat, it evidently is founded on some French or Italian story probably the former —*Walpole Collection* Emil Koeppel in his *Quellen Studien zu den Dramen George Chapman's, Philip*

Pophams Negatur might infer a positive In the curious case of Eugene Aram executed for a long-concealed murder suspicion was drawn upon the man who was afterwards admitted evidence by such an expression A skeleton being found some workmen suggested it might be the body of one Clarke (the murdered person) who had been long missing A person <sup>1</sup> among the croud used the strong expression "that is no more Dan Clarke's bone than it is mine" in such a tone and manner as to impress all present with the belief that he knew where the real body was deposited which accordingly he pointed out on farther examination

I am happy to hear Mrs Lecky continues to exercise her ghostly functions though on a smaller scale than formerly The whole history is to be found as I think in Dunton's Athenian Oracle The Bishop was the unfortunate Atherton executed for an unnatural crime The ghost of Mrs Lecky was a very fine one I do not know the original of the unnatural combat though I remember my friend Weber once mentioned it as existing among some of the Italian Novellieri from whom our earlier dramatists so often took their plots Gifford will probably say some thing of this

Lord Somervilles death was a cruel deprivation to all

*Massinger's, etc* (Strassburg, 1897) remarks that the source of Massinger's tragedy has never been ascertained, but he himself is convinced that, like a later more famous tragedy, it reflects the story of the Cenci which closed with the executions of September 1599—pp 86 7 "Dunton's Athenian Oracle" is John Dunton's *Athenianism* (1710), and Atherton is John Atherton (1598-1640), an Irish Bishop who, according to the *DNB* was in 1640 accused of unnatural crime, and being found guilty was first degraded and afterwards hanged at Dublin on 5th Dec From the tale of "The Apparition Evidence," contained in Dunton's work, Scott recounts the story of Mrs Lecky (Leckie or Leakey) in *Letters on Demonology* (1830), pp 392-96, and concludes by saying that, according to Dunton, Mrs Lecky's daughter-in-law received a commission "from the ghost [Mrs Lecky's] to deliver to Atherton, Bishop of Waterford, a guilty and unfortunate man, who afterwards died by the hands of the executioner"

<sup>1</sup> The "person" was one Houseman, Aram's accomplice, who had been suspected of the murder of Clark For a full account of the murder see E R Watson, *Eugene Aram His Life and Trial* (Notable English Trials 1913)

his friends but especially to us He was a near neighbour  
& so kind a one that scarce a week passd without our  
spending a day or two together I remain Sir very much  
Your obliged humble Servant WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 27 *Sept*r [1820] <sup>1</sup>

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

To JAMES HOGG, ALTRIVE <sup>2</sup>

[Copy—Extract]

desired to be forwarded

DEAR HOGG,—We are to have a grand meeting of the  
friends of Pitt & his doctrines here on the 12th the Cock  
of the North (Marq of Huntly) to be in the Chair <sup>3</sup> The  
object is to make our musters and display on the same day  
with the Whig dogs who have invited down Lambton and  
Lord Gray and we are in hopes to make them show like  
gilt twopences to us

For lords and lairds will both be there  
And wow but they'll be braw Jamie

Now I have a ticket for your acceptance and orders from  
the Committee of management to request that the Author  
of "Donald MacDonald" will favour us with his com-  
pany Do come if possible and tune your pipes to a  
clever stave for the occasion <sup>4</sup> Yours truly

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 3rd *January* [1821]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> As Lord Somerville had died on 5th October, 1819, (see Vol V p 509 and note), the September of this letter is probably that of 1820

<sup>2</sup> A farm in Yarrow parish, Selkirkshire

<sup>3</sup> For this see Vol VI pp 326 and note, 329, 336 7

<sup>4</sup> We omit a report of Sophia's indisposition and a postscript saying he sends the letter through Laidlaw

TO JAMES HOGG

MY DEAR HOGG,—I am very sorry to observe from the tenor of your letter that you have permitted the caricature in Blackwoods magazine to sit so near your feelings though I am not surprized that it should have given pain to Mrs Hogg Amends or if you please revenge is the natural wish of human nature when it receives these sort of provocations but in general it cannot be gratified without entailing much worse consequences than could possibly flow from the first injury No human being who has common sense can possibly think otherwise of you than he did before after reading all the tirade of extravagant ridicule with which the article is filld—it is plain to me that the writer of the article neither thought of you as he has expressd himself nor expected or desired the reader to do so He only wishd to give you momentary pain and were I you I would not let him see that in this he has succeeded To answer such an article seriously would be fighting with a shadow and throwing stones at moonshine If a man says that I am guilty of some particular fact I would vindicate myself if I could but if he caricatures my person and depreciates my talents I would content myself with thinking that the world will judge of my exterior and of my powers of composition by the evidence of their own eyes and of my works I cannot as a lawyer and a friend advise you to go to law a defen[d]er would certainly set up upon the Chaldee Manuscript and upon many passages in your account of your own life and your complaint of personality would be met by the old proverb that “He who plays at bowls must meet with rubbers ” As to knocking out of brains that is talking *no how*—if you could knock any brains into a bookseller you should have my consent but not to knock out any part of the portion with which heaven has endowd them

I know the advice to sit quiet under injury is hard to flesh and blood But nevertheless I give it under the firmest conviction that it is the most [calculated] for your peace happi-

ness and credit The public has shown their full sense of your original genius & I think this unjust aggression and extravagant affectation of depreciating you will make no impression upon their feelings I would also distrust the opinion of those friends who urge you to hostilities—they may be over zealous in your behalf and overlook the preservation of your ease and your comfort like the brewers man who pushd his guest into the boiling vat [?] that he might be sure to give him drink enough—or they may be a little malicious and have no objection (either from personal motives or for the mere fun's sake) to egg on and encourage a quarrel In all the literary quarrels of my time and I have seen many I remember none in which both parties did not come off with injured peace of mind and diminishd reputation It is as if a decent man was seen boxing in the street

It is therefore my earnest advice to you to look on the whole matter with contempt and never in one way or other to take any notice of it Goldie's publication might with some people have a bad effect because he had certainly reason to complain But this absurd piece of extravagance can have none—it leaves you in every respect the same James Hogg it found you or if otherwise it arms on your favour those generous feelings which revolt at seeing your parts and talents made the subject of ill-natured ridicule

I am sure I feel for Mrs Hogg on the occasion because as an affectionate wife I am sure she must feel hurt and angry on your behalf But then she must as a woman of sense reconcile herself to the course most favourable to your peace of mind your private fortune and the safety of your person

Blackwoods neglect to settle is a grievance of a more serious nature I have no influence with him whatsoever and Lockhart as I suspect as little But if you come here agreeable to what is requested in the enclosed we will be most heartily glad to see you and will consider what can be done in that part of the matter

I have only to add that I myself in similar circumstances should take no notice of any piece of scurrilous raillery which appeared anonymously in periodical publications and that I should conceive my honour much more at risque in descending to such a contest than in neglecting or contemning the injury You is very truly

ABBOTSFORD *Saturday* [1821] <sup>1</sup>

W SCOTT

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

<sup>1</sup> The occasion of Hogg's anger was doubtless the outrageous "guying" of his *Memours* (i.e. the *Memours of the Author's Life written by Himself*, prefixed to *The Mountain Bard*, 1821) in the August number of *Blackwood's Magazine*, No. LIV, vol. x, 1821. The criticism is contained in what purports to be a letter, the first of a series of *Familiar Epistles*, to Christopher North, but is by Wilson himself, partly irritated by the bland conceit of Hogg's *Memours*, but also indulging his vein of extravagant facetiousness. The tone was so scurrilous that James Ballantyne, when printing it, expostulated and threatened to withdraw his support of *Blackwood*. Blackwood himself, while snubbing James, promised to moderate the tone of the article. Whether this was done is not clear from the text of the letter, but a note was added hinting that the letter was not to be taken too seriously. The object of this 'deevilrie,' to use an expression of the Shepherd's, is to add to the interest which his life has excited. It is even suggested that the letter was written by Hogg himself. But Hogg's complacent eulogies of himself had as early as 1818 called forth a *Letter to Mr James Hogg* occasioned by an Essay now publishing piece meal in Constable's Edinburgh Magazine, on your life and writings (probably by Hogg himself). The letter is signed 'Timothy Tickler,' but is in the style of Lockhart rather than Wilson, contemptuous at once of Hogg and of Edinburgh's ignorance of Greek. In August 1823 Hogg's *Three Perils of Women* was reviewed in a similar facetious fashion but in a more friendly tone. Blackwood's attitude towards Hogg, in all the early numbers, varies in the most incalculable fashion between patronising, but often enthusiastic, eulogy and excessively facetious, but none the less offensive, 'guying' of the man and his work. The date of this letter of Scott's will be 1821 or early 1822 at latest. For a published version of the letter and for the effect of the ridiculing of Hogg upon his wife see *Memorials of James Hogg*, edited by Mrs. Garden (1885), pp. 135-9. "Goldie's publication" is *A Letter to A Friend in London* (MS. 1024, *Nat Lib Scot*) in which George Goldie, the publisher, retorted vigorously to Hogg's assertion in the same Memoir of himself, prefixed to the third edition of *The Mountain Bard* (1821), that he had not been treated fairly over the third edition of *The Queen's Wake*, though Hogg himself declared he went behind Goldie's back to Constable to ask him to publish the edition because there was a report of Goldie's failure. In the *Letter*, dated at the beginning "Edinburgh, 23d May 1821" and addressed at the end from "Robert Street, Limehouse, London," Goldie expresses indignation at the way his feelings "have been outraged, and my reputation assailed," p. 2. See Edith C. Batho, *The Ettrick Shepherd* (1927), p. 70.



To [JOHANN HEINRICH VOSS]<sup>1</sup>

DEAR SIR,—I should be as destitute of every grain of the characteristic feeling of vanity which belongs to literary folks as well as of all other and better sentiments were I though by nature a slow and procrastinating correspondent to suffer any length of time to elapse without returning you my best thanks for the very kind letter which I have received from the translator of Shakespeare and the other members of his amiable family I have

<sup>1</sup> Johann Heinrich Voss (1751 1826), one of the German translators of Shakespeare He lived in Heidelberg, 1805 26, and from there he writes on 3rd March, 1822 We give a translated excerpt from the letter, which is in German “You will not be angry, dear Man, if from a far distance, one who is personally unknown interrupts you with the voice of gratitude He does what he cannot leave undone, and, which gives him the just courage to do so, he does it in the name of a family whose head, as singer of *Liuse*, as translator of Homer, of Aristophanes, of Virgil, and of late years of Shakespeare, is not unknown to you The name Scott is in our house a very dear name, that you would feel if you could hear my honoured mother speak who, in her 20th year *Liuse*, now in her 66th, an old sensible housewife, preserves all the sensibility of heart of youth To her I read every evening, when I have finished my academic tasks, from your works, and we finish every reading, not with ‘What a precious poem,’ but with ‘What a precious man’ Admiration I pay to your great countryman Byron, for your admiration is a side issue, to you belongs a better due, the due of the love of my father It is a proverb only the good man can be a true poet, that this is also yours each of your works teaches There is a report that you will travel to Switzerland and Italy If that be so (and may it be so) then, dear Sir, travel by Heidelberg You will find an affection, a respect that has no limits, and not alone in our house My colleague Tiedemann (Professor of Anatomy) will read nothing but Walter Scott & if you do not speak German as we do not English, yet each understands the other’s language and that will suffice And herewith farewell, thou noble man

my noble Scot,  
By Heav’n, I cannot flatter, I defy  
The tongues of soothers, but a braver place  
In my heart’s love hath no man than yourself

HEINRICH VOSS  
ABRAHAM VOSS

For my brother I must sign as he is not in Heidelberg [in another hand]  
With my own hand, which would grasp yours in brotherly clasp,

JOHANN HEINRICH VOSS

and sisterly, ERNESTINE VOSS

—*Walpole Collection* Heinrich and Abraham are Johann’s sons For a study of Voss and his translations see W Taylor of Norwich, *Historic Survey of German Poetry*, II (1829), Section 3, p 58

been now for a great many years a sincere admirer of the German literature which has something in it so similar to our own and I must of course feel much flattered by finding that I hold any place in the regard of one who has done so much as you have done to unite the one to the other I have long wished to visit Germany but my knowledge of the language is superficial & so totally confined to books that I fear I should lose what I should much regret the opportunity of holding easy and familiar intercourse with its inhabitants Still however under every disadvantage I must see if possible the country of which I have read and thought so much and Heidelberg will now have greater temptations for me than its beautiful & celebrated vicinity and its great Ton<sup>1</sup> when at the fullest could have afforded

I agree entirely with you that the Commentators of Shakespeare have overburthend the text with notes and with disputes trivial in themselves and not always conducted either with taste or temper Still we owe them a great deal for the quantity of curious miscellaneous information respecting the poet and his times [which] has been assembled by Reed,<sup>2</sup> Malone, Stephens and others and which certainly could not otherwise have been presented to an ordinary reader in such an inviting shape The great fault seems to be that they must & will have every thing completely & accurately explained without considering that Shakespeare like all other poets who write in a hurry very frequently uses a form of words the meaning of which is clear enough when the full sentence is considered although it may be very difficult to dissect the sentence grammatically and apply the special and separate meaning to each branch or word in it There are I believe some good editions with selections of the notes but I think to read Shakespear[e] luxuriously

<sup>1</sup> Scott refers to the famous Heidelberg Tun or cask in the cellar under the castle It was built in 1751, its capacity is about 50,000 gallons, and it is 20 ft high and 31 ft long

<sup>2</sup> Commas supplied

one should use two copies the one for perusal altogether without notes and the other a full edition cum notis variorum to consult upon any point of difficulty or interest In abridging the notes for the use of the German reader I am sure you will find your task more easy than your modesty seems to make you apprehend You may readily dispense with all the philological<sup>1</sup> and antiquarian notices which are only interesting to the English reader The historical notes may be greatly abridged It is of little consequence to foreign nations how many Earls of Northumberland fell in the contests of Yorke and Lancaster or whether Shakespeare is correct in the pedigree of Roger Mortimer The critical notes of Johnson and those which are explanatory of ancient manners are the one so interesting and the other so necessary to understand the author that I have little doubt they will in the opinion of all nations add greatly to the value of the text

It is very possible that the scene you refer to in Henry VIII may have been written in the lowest and most colloquial stile of blank verse But it is so rough & harsh and differs so little from prose that I doubt much if poetry would consider it as worth reclaiming

There cannot be the least doubt concerning the truth of your interpretation of the passage "This Christening will *get* christenings"<sup>2</sup> But it is unnecessary to make any addition to the text for the word *get* is in common use in the same sense as to *beget* & colloquially the more frequently used of the two—to *get* a child or to *beget* a child are commonly & constantly used as synonymous phrases Of this you are fully aware and I think with you there can be no harm in discarding the prefix *Be* if you think the r[h]ythm worth restoring

March—April 1822]

[*Unsigned*]

[*Edin Univ Lib*]

<sup>1</sup> He writes "philologycan"

<sup>2</sup> This one christening will beget a thousand —*Henry VIII*, Act v, sc 4

TO WILLIAM BEWICK <sup>1</sup>

SIR,—I have pleasure in affording you all the information I possess concerning the picture, but it is not much. Mr Bullock, the naturalist, brought me a message from a gentleman then going abroad and disposing of a collection of pictures, expressing a wish that I should be possessed of this one either by gift or purchase, naming a moderate price (10*l* I think, but am not certain), if I preferred the latter arrangement. He stated that the gentleman who had so kindly thought upon me, had received the picture in a present from a friend in Prussia, and therefore did not wish to expose it to public sale. This is all I know of it. I have forgotten even the name of the former proprietor, but I have it written down somewhere.

I am happy to have had an opportunity of gratifying your curiosity, which will not however be altogether gratis. I am afraid the ladies will hold you but a perjured person unless you favour them with a copy of the sketch of Abbotsford which you had the goodness to promise them, and which will find us here if sent by any of the coaches. I will be happy to see you if you will call as you pass through Edinburgh, being Sir, Your most obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT

39 CASTLE STREET, 18 May, 1824

[*Landseer's Life of William Bewick*]

<sup>1</sup> William Bewick (1795-1866), portrait and historical painter, pupil of Haydon, 1817-20. In 1824 he came to Edinburgh, where he received an invitation from Hazlitt, then staying at Melrose, to meet Sheridan Knowles. In April of this year Hazlitt had married in Scotland, as his second wife, Mrs Isabella Bridgewater, who, according to Cowden Clarke, was Scotch (see his letter to W. C. Hazlitt, Nov. 2, 1866, *Carew Hazlitt MSS.*). According to Bewick's *Life and Letters*, the artist invited Hazlitt to accompany him to Abbotsford, where he was to paint a copy of Cawood's picture of the head of Mary Queen of Scots. He went alone, however, and informed Scott that Hazlitt was staying in the neighbourhood, but when Bewick returned he found Hazlitt had "quitted Melrose for the south." After his return to Edinburgh, Bewick received the above letter from Scott, referring to the picture he had copied while at Abbotsford. See T. Landseer, *Life and Letters of William Bewick* (1871), 1 pp. 169-99 and P. P. Howe, *Life of William Hazlitt* (1922), pp. 370-72. For a former reference to Cawood's picture see letter to Pitcairn, 18th September, 1822, Vol. VII, pp. 245-6 and note.

## TO CHARLES KIRKPATRICK SHARPE

MY DEAR CHARLES,—I have not neglected your hint but have written to the Provost <sup>1</sup> *Valeat* (as they say) *quantum valere potest*. But I fear the rabid disposition to demolish whatever looks ancient is a passion too strongly planted in the breast of all corporate bodies to be combated by any arguments of mine. I have been here for these two days—a little down-hearted when I think of the friends I have been happy with in this fine castle but glad to have a quiet ride round the princely demesnes where about 1200 acres of plantations are speedily repairing the devastation of Old Q. If Drumlanrig has not quite recovered her gown of green she has at least got a sleeve of it & makes a very different show from this time eleven years when I first knew her. The Duke is shooting up into a fine youth and keeps his natural benignity & good humour. His tutor is a grandson of old Blakeney a layman which I think a great advantage & has seen much of the world. There is a chest here of [the] first Duke's letters catalogued & in order, those of the Duke of York should be curious. How you would luxuriate among them! The old flower gardens are restored in good stile with all their alleys and compartments but much remains to be done. It will take £50,000 to do all that should be done in restoring the place to its pristine splendour but the Duke (first of his race that it could be said of) will have that and more to bestow without imprudence.

So much for a Lord of land. I should be [in] the way of thriving for I also paid my respects to a Lady of Ingots Mrs Coutts <sup>2</sup> whom I know of old and who has always been kind and civil to me. I suppose she is now blazing on the

<sup>1</sup> Alexander Henderson to whom, Sharpe had suggested, Scott should write in order to prevent the demolition of the front of the old Leith jail. See Vol. VIII, p. 372 and note.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol. VIII, pp. 348 and note, 351, 353, 354.

Edinburgh horizon—with a train of seven domestics besides a companion and a doctor. If she comes to Abbotsford as she proposes I must tip her Goneril and abate her train. She is herself a good humourd laughter-loving dame & seems to have no reason to regret the time when *Cantavit vacua*, her spirits being very good though she can make thread papers of bank notes.

I hope I shall hear the Melodies of the M[ackenzie]s which according to your description must be rather formidable. The hot weather has produced a general plague of wasps

We nor breakfast dine nor sup

Wasps come and eat all up

Tink a Tink a ting etc

By the way I have some bundles of ballads unbound and one or two bound volumes which you have not seen— Shall I send them in for you. I fear there are many duplicates in the unbound collection. The catalogue of my books gets on & I find much convenience in having the assistance of an amanuensis *Scopulis surdior Icarus*<sup>1</sup> so that he minds his own business and is disturbed by no other person's proceedings. Adieu health & fraternity

DRUMLANRIG 29 August [1824]

WALTER SCOTT

I shall be home tomorrow via Gray-mares-tail

[*Hornel*]

TO JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET, LONDON

DEAR SIR,—I was favord with your letter of 13<sup>2</sup> Current and am much obliged to you for the frankness of the communication. It certainly removes all objections

<sup>1</sup> Horace, *Odes*, III, vii, 21. The deaf amanuensis is Huntly Gordon. See Vol IV, p 361 note. For the formidable effect of Sir Alexander Muir Mackenzie's daughters' voices upon the birds and rats of Abercromby Place see *Sharpe's Letters*, II, p 270.

<sup>2</sup> See Vol IX, pp 249, 250 and note. The above letter amplifies the correspondence in Sept-Oct 1825 concerning Lockhart's appointment to the editorship of *The Quarterly Review*.

which I could have to Lockharts accepting the present very advantageous offers excepting those which are founded upon the loss I must sustain in my daughters society and his and these are of too selfish a nature to be placed in opposition to any arrangement which promises them the advantages now held out Allow me to add that I am particularly pleased that this sacrifice is made to meet your wishes which for many reasons I would at any time be anxious to forward

I consider the situation of Editor of the Quarterly as one which any man of letters might be proud to accept and I do think that with Lockharts talents learning and activity of mind he is well qualified to undertake that difficul[t] and important task Of the other charge I am not so adequate a judge but your arrangement takes our Hidalgo[s] delicacy entirely out of the question At an earlier period of Lockharts [career] I should have feared that a love of fun and a tendency to satire might have made such a situation & such opportunities for indulging these qualities rather dangerous in his hands But I am confident that the interval of a few years and a good deal of experience has made him sufficiently cautious in these respects In other respects I am sure he has the means and power to meet your wishes

With the most perfect confidence in you and all the parties interested it is my duty to my daughter & her present & future family to wish that the arrangements as agreeable to all parties should be put into a legal shape so soon as your preliminaries are fully settled Lockharts views in this country must be completely ended so soon as he has determined on his removal and of course it will be necessary that the new prospects which open to him instead should be put out of question This is a subject which Lockhart himself will not find it delicate to treat upon where he has been used with so much candour & liberality but we will be perfectly satisfied with such arrangements as may be made under the eye of our

mutual friend Mr Wright <sup>1</sup> who has taken so much interest in this matter I am sure you will put the right construction on a fathers caution (& that father an old lawyer) in a matter of so much importance

I was very glad to learn from M[r] D'Israeli that it was not the purpose to adopt the plan of becoming determined supporters of any set of Ministers <sup>2</sup> in the proposed paper but to place it on a dignified and independent footing addressing the sound and intelligent part of the community A mere treasury paper would never be generally popular and the very appearance of it should be carefully avoided Indeed the support which it might be proper to give them on constitutional questions would be wholly worthless and ineffectual if the independence of the paper is not previously establish[ed] on a broad and indisputable basis That point being once sufficiently assured I certainly conceive it possible with the extensive command of capital and intelligence which you have arranged to get the whiphand of the Times or any other paper going But of all this you are a better Judge than I am I am dear Sir your most obedt Servant WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 16 October [PM 1825] <sup>3</sup>

[*New York Public Library*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

DEAR JAMES,—Our business in court today was so pressing that I had not a moments time to correct the inclosed and I have not a Tasso by me Perhaps Mr Hogarth will be so good as correct it which I dare not venture on my own inaccurate Italian

Terry proposes to dine here tomorrow Perhaps you

<sup>1</sup> See Vol IX, p 254 and note 1

<sup>2</sup> See Disraeli's letter to Lockhart, 25th November, in note, Vol IX, p 255

<sup>3</sup> For this letter we are specially indebted to Mr William Ruff, 1941 Yale Station, New Haven (Conn) who favoured us with a photostat of the manuscript



will take your chance of a bad dinner along with him I  
beggd him to provoke you to this Yours truly

[8th July 1826]<sup>1</sup>

W S

[*Buccleuch*]

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

MY DEAR JAMES,—I would not be bound to write  
quibbles or grammar for all the profits of Napoleon  
Godsake man make it what you like It seems sense & I  
cannot make it more

W S

[1827 ?]

[*Buccleuch*]

TO WILLIAM FORD,<sup>2</sup> BOOKSELLER, MANCHESTER

CASTLE STREET, EDINBURGH

*Thursday morning*

MY DEAR SIR,—Many thanks for the trouble you have  
had in transmitting Mrs Birch's interesting and very

<sup>1</sup> "July 10 [1826] Terry and J Ballantvne dined with me yester  
day '—*Journal* Scott was at this time living at Mrs Brown s lodgings,  
No 4 North St David's Street Scott most often gives no number, but in  
other letters, e g to Lockhart, Vol X, p 37, he gives 5 and elsewhere 6  
But Gibson in his *Reminiscences of Sir Walter Scott* (1871), says "No 4 North  
St David s Street, a house now taken down, and on the site of which stand  
the offices of the Imperial Insurance Company" (p 22) Scott was  
notoriously inaccurate in dates and numbers

<sup>2</sup> William Ford (1771 1832), bookseller and bibliographer The original  
edition of *Venus and Adonis* was contained in his first catalogue, 1805  
From '3 King Street, Manchester, on 13th July 1827, Ford sends Scott,  
among other things, a copy of a printed proclamation issued by Prince  
Charlie when at Manchester On 16th August 1824, Mrs Charlotte Birch  
had written to ask Scott for a copy of her father's last speech Some poems  
composed in 1745, which she has "in memory," will be written down and  
sent if Scott would like them To this letter is appended the following  
Memorandum ' Mrs Birch is 77 years of age, of an old Jacobite family  
Her Grandfather was killed in 1715, & her father suffered in 1745, his head  
was stuck up in the Manchester Market place, & one of the earliest circum  
stances which Mrs B can remember in her life was the breaking of the  
windows of her mother's house by the mob, because she would not illumin  
ate Her [Mrs Birch's] address is Shakespeare row, near Ardwick,  
Manchester ' Both letters are in the Walpole Collection

acceptable present of needle work, and I beg you will take the trouble to transmit my grateful and respectful thanks

I remember her father's name well among the Manchester sufferers in 1745 and, amongst a large collection of things relating to that revolutionary matter, I have a Copy of *his last speech*

I assure you that I hold my integrity so fast in the period which Mrs B thinks interesting, that at the first interview I ever had with his present Majesty (George the Fourth) the Lord Chief Commissioner, who was present, said that he could not discern which of us was the staunchest Jacobite, only that I always said *the Prince* in speaking of Charles Edward, and the Prince Regent called him *the Pretender*

To speak truth, it was in my younger days thought a rude thing to speak in private society of the rebellion of the Pretender, because some persons concerned were then frequently present

The common phrase was, "*being out* in 1745," for an engagement with that affair Believe me always dear Sir Your obliged humble Servant

[*probably July 1824*]  
[*Abbotsford Copies*]

WALIER SCOTT

To [JAMES BALLANTYNE]

I cannot afford to be merciful to Master Oliver Proudfoot,<sup>1</sup> although I am heartily glad there is any one of the personages sufficiently interesting to make you care whether he lives or dies But it would cost my cancelling half a volume, and rather than do so, I would, like the valiant Baron of Clackmannan, kill the whole characters, the author, and the printer Besides, *entre nous*, the resurrection of Athelstane was a botch It struck me when I was reading Ivanhoe over the other day

<sup>1</sup> Scott is working over the proofs of *The Fair Maid of Perth* See Vol X, pp 364 82 *passim* Lockhart gives no definite date to this letter James's advice was taken, with unhappy effect, in *St Ronan's Well*

I value your criticism as much as ever , but the worst is, my faults are better known to myself than to you Tell a young beauty that she wears an unbecoming dress, or an ill-fashioned ornament, or speaks too loud, or commits any other mistake which she can correct, and she will do so, if she has sense and a good opinion of your taste But tell a fading beauty, that her hair is getting gray, her wrinkles apparent, her gait heavy, and that she has no business in a ball-room but to be ranged against the wall as an evergreen, and you will afflict the poor old lady, without rendering her any service She knows all that better than you I am sure the old lady in question takes pains enough at her toilette, and gives you, her trusty *souvante*, enough of trouble Yours truly,

W S

[c February, 1828]

[Lockhart]

TO GENERAL DAVID STUART OF GARTH <sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR GENERAL STUART,—I am favoured with your letter I rejoice in your appointment since it holds out to you the means of obtaining some of the good things of fortune which cannot be lodged in kinder or more generous hands I am quite sure that men of all colours and complexions will find in you a paternal ruler

You would not have left Scotland without seeing me if

<sup>1</sup> For whom see Vol X, p 468 and note 1 The above is a letter of congratulation on Stewart's appointment as Governor of St Lucia, West Indies On 6th October he has written to Scott, expressing disappointment at not seeing him previous to his departure At the request of his friend, Mr Menzies of Pitfoddells, "an honourable Jacobite of the old school," he sends a MS by Menzies's uncle, Mr Maxwell of Kirkconnell, "an eye witness of many events of the years 1745 and 46, and which, being from the personal observation of an honourable judicious man, may be defended I thought I knew as much about Perth as most people but I find that the author of the Fair Maid of Perth knows, as he does on all subjects, a great deal more"—*Walpole Collection* James Maxwell of Kirkconnell's *Narrative of Prince Charles' Expedition to Scotland, 1745* appears in *A L C* p 23 See Vol XI, p 60 and note 3 Regarding the phrase, "Nish Nish Nish," Dean Ramsay in his *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* (twenty-second

I had heard of the party who took a festive farewell of you in Auld Reekie I think some of them might [have] put it in my option to come to town & considerd that a recluse like me does not always see the newspapers where I suppose the purpose was duly announced But I look forward with great pleasure to the hailing you once more among high bonnets & brave fellows with the Nish Nish Nish which I have so often joind you in

Pray tell me by what conveyance you send Pitfoddels Manuscript which promise[s] most valuable information If it is not very large Sir Francis Freling will forward it if you put [it] in the P Office with an inner cover addressd to me It is not the first kindness which I have received from your excellent friend and I value his kindness as it ought to be valued

A letter came inclosed to me which I return it being obviously designd for some other friend I would forward it but there is no address

I suppose you will see the Lockharts before you go away both of them hold you in high honour and regard

And now my dear general to know that you have the power of doing good is to know that you are well and happy I send a list of Subscriptions on the other side It is vain in me perhaps even to comply with a request so flattering but you ask it and whether in joke or earnest your request must be obeyd Always most truly yours

ABBOTSFORD 18 October 1828

WALTER SCOTT

[*Edgar N Brown*]

edition, 1874), p 116, cites from the Rev Duncan Campbell of Moulin the phrase as used on the occasion of drinking a toast with *Highland* honours "With one foot on their chair and another on the *table*," the gentlemen drank the toast with Gaelic shrieks and frantic gestures The form was

<i>Gaelic</i>	<i>Translation</i>
So !	Prepare !
Nish ! Nish !	Now ! Now !
Sud ris ! Sud ris !	Yon again ! Yon again !
Nish ! Nish !	Now ! Now !
Thig ris ! Thig ris !	At it again ! At it again !
A on uair eile !	Another time, or one cheer more !

TO DAVID LAING

MY DEAR MR SECRETARY,—The original proprietors of the Provincial antiquities would have willingly obliged Mr Bell but the concern is closed the books sold and the plates also disposed of a year since & where I know not

Mr Yellowleys communication obliges me much both the letter & ballad are really original and very much to my purpose

We will call a meeting of the Vice presid committee immediatly

After speaking with several persons we have agreed that the 28 January will do well for our Gaudeamus Lord Haddington has promised to come and I hope to bring the Duke of Buccleuch if he does not happen [to] be engaged<sup>1</sup> By Lord Chief Commissrs desire I have to request particularly to send no Bannatyne notices either of meetings or dinners to Lord Eldin<sup>2</sup> as his health does not permit him to attend & the notes distress him Pray attend to this Yours truly

W SCOTT

SHANDWICK PLACE, *Tuesday*

[*December 1828*]

[*Edin Univ Lib*]

TO J W CROKER

DEAR CROKER,<sup>3</sup>—An add[it]ion to what passd between old Lord Auchinleck and Johnson was recounted by the old Judge himself to the late Sir Adam Fergusson of Kilkerran who told it to the gentleman from whom I

<sup>1</sup> For this forthcoming meeting of the Bannatyne Club, etc, see Vol XI, p 64

<sup>2</sup> i.e. John Clerk, the Hon Lord Eldin, who resigned his place on the bench this year and died in 1832 See Cockburn's *Life of Jeffrey* (1852), vol 1, pp 199-205

<sup>3</sup> This is a continuation of the correspondence, begun in January 1829 (see Vol XI, p 110), in which Scott kept supplying Croker with anecdotal and other material for his edition of *Boswell's Johnson* (1831)

receivd it They had got into a violent dispute about the comparative merit of the English and Scottish churches In the course of their altercation Lord Auchinleck was hard pressd by the question what deeply learn'd work in theology had been written by a divine of the presbyterian Church "Od" said Lord Auchinleck<sup>1</sup> "the chield rather non-plus'd me there—for you ken our bodies are<sup>2</sup> rather lazy However I pulld a spirit and resolving to take my chance I expressd great surprize that a scholar of his eminence was not familiar with the learn'd work of Durham on the Epistle to the Galatians and as he had never heard of it he was obliged to be silent and promised to read our Durham on the first opportunity I think I have sold him a bargain Sir Adam"

Durham on the Galatians is I believe a very heavy piece of Calvinism and the old Judge laughd and enjoyd himself extremely at having past him upon the Doctor as a great author

I send you this while it is in my head being very truly  
yours

WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 25 february [1829]

[*Fale Univ Lib*]

TO J W CROKER

MY DEAR CROKER,—I return your proof which I think looks as well as possible in the text and the Notes seem likely to prove most entertaining<sup>3</sup> I was struck with the justice of the affecting note on mental insanity How many men of talents have I known where the under

<sup>1</sup> We supply both here and at end of the paragraph inverted commas omitted by Scott

<sup>2</sup> "Have" is written, we amend

<sup>3</sup> In his reply of 6th April Croker says that in his preface he means to record his gratitude to Scott for his assistance See Vol XI, p 119, note 1 He would like Scott's consent "to place w scott after such notes as may be *exclusively yours*", of course if there be any that could cause offence he (Croker) will take such upon himself—*Walpole Collection*

structure of the character had a touch of madness In fact of the greatest & ablest even I have known something of this kind was visible to close observers

The hereditary feud of Johnson against the *Excise* is very diverting <sup>1</sup>

I inclose a few scraps which have occur'd since my last was dispatch'd & shall continue at the risque of repetition to jot down what occurs to [me] What proof sheets you send shall be return'd with all honour Always your obliged & faithful

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE

3 April [1829]

I fear Lord Stowels packet is gone for aye <sup>2</sup> I take the freedom to use your frank for a heavy parcel for Lockhart containing a manuscript book of Travels—pray let my *modest* friend John Christie take it to Regents park The manuscript is in a separate parcel

[*Yale Univ Lib*]

TO J W CROKER

MY DEAR CROKER,—I cannot guess who the impudent fellow might be George Dempster of Dunnichen<sup>3</sup> I knew but as he lived to [a] great age (I am not sure how long but could easily learn) he has not been many years dead He was a man of considerable fortune which he injured by engaging in Borough politicks but repaid by oeconomy in the latter days of his life In December 1767 Mr Dempster was brought to trial before the High Court of Justiciary for the crime of Bribery & Corruption charged as precedent in a recent election for the Borough of Cupar The case comprehended some curious points of Law both respecting the question how far bribery was an offence at

<sup>1</sup> See Croker's *Boswell's Johnson*, I, p 7 note, where it is proved that Johnson's father had been prosecuted by the Commissioners of Excise

See Vol XI, pp 151 with note 2, 152

<sup>3</sup> For whom see Vol XI, p 166 and note 1, and for the impudent fellow, see same Vol, p 151, note 2

Common Law—whether the Court of Justiciary was liable to have its sentences reviewed in the House of Lords and whether the Criminal court of Scotland could interfere with such a question at all without breach of privilege The court finally found the charge was not sufficiently specific nor had the private prosecutor a claim to insist on it and so Mr Dempster was acquitted You will find a full account of the trial in MacLaurins Criminal cases No 79 of the volume

Mr Dempster was a man of the most amiable manners and very witty & accomplishd He had great credit for talent amongst<sup>t</sup> his countrymen Burns mentions him more than once with Eulogy

A title Dempster merits it

A garter gee to Willie Pitt

And again in [the] address [to] the Chosen five and forty  
Dempster a true blue Scott I warran'

He was Secretary to the Knights of the Thistle Finally he live[d] at Saint Andrews where he had for a constant companion the Philosopher Adam Fergusson a contemporary of his own They both possessd their faculties to the last and I have seen humourous verses which have past between them when upwards of ninety One of them a burlesque Epitaph designed by Dempster for himself I will send if you wish it and will also send you the exact day of his death There is a most interesting story of a matrimonial Speculation of George Dempster but though<sup>1</sup> it might tell [better] over a bottle [of] your good claret than it would show in print or writing Sophia has undertaken to rummage the scots Magazine for the precise date of Dempsters death I was about one or two and twenty when I knew him & have not since met a more pleasing man Yours always

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD MELROSE

22 July [1829]

[Yale Univ Lib]

<sup>1</sup> 'Though' written, but it should be deleted



## TO J W CROKER

MY DEAR CROKER,—George Dempster of Dunnichen died I am informd from good authority at his own house of Dunnichen 12 february 1818 in the 86th year of his age rather younger than I thought The following is his epitaph by himself about the last year of his life The idea of being a Gamester only arises from his amusing himself frequently with cards at very trifling stakes

Traveller

Pray for the Soul  
Of the deceased George Dempster  
In his youth a great fool  
In his old age a gamester <sup>1</sup>

2

Are you curious to know ?  
On this tomb you shall see  
Life's thread he let go  
When just ninety three

3

So sound was his bottom  
His acquaintance all wondered  
How old Nickie had got him  
Till he lived out the hundred

4

To his money concerns  
He paid little attention  
First letting his land  
Then pawning his pension

5

But his precious time  
No much better did manage  
To the end of his line  
From his earliest Nonage

6

He divided his hours  
into two equal parts  
And spent one half in sleeping  
The other at the *Cartes* <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> ' This is good rhyme in Scotland when the word is pronounced Gemster '   
—Scott's note in the letter

<sup>2</sup> " Cards "—Scott's note in the letter

Thes[c] slipshod verses are not I think amiss for eighty five or six years If you like you may add it to your notes  
Yours truly

ABBOTSFORD

W SCOTT

25 July [1829]

I am just alarmd with a menaced visit of the Duc de Chartres The Lord keep a grip of me as old Sir James [Wemyss] used to say <sup>1</sup> What can we make of an Altesse Royale in this wilderness

[*Yale Univ Lib*]

To MAJOR WALTER SCOTT,<sup>2</sup> KINGS HUSSARS, IPSWICH,  
SUFFOLK

To remain at the Post Office till calld for

DEAR WALTER,—I add a few lines to Annes epistle to express the pleasure I had on receiving yours She has informd you of our state this year which has been very

<sup>1</sup> See Vol X p 360 The threatened visit did not apparently come off In Baron d Haussiez *Great Britain in 1833* he describes a visit to Scott in apparently 1831, and gives a rather melancholy picture Scott was polite but would respond to no opening, even the homage paid to his work Anne was not much more communicative The Duc de Chartres was later Charles X, and the Baron one of his ministers

The above letter is written on the last two sheets of a letter from Anne to Walter in which she says that ' Lockhart has had a *lively time* of it spent in Sophias room indeed it has been as Sombre a Summer as I ever remember " See Vol XI, p 251 'I brought from Edinr the *Ginows* of our family in the *long* person of Missy I am sure it was very kind of her to come The Fo [i.e. FO—Charles of the Foreign Office] departed the other day very stiff with rheumatism He did not seem to know in the least where he was going '—*Law Collection, Nat Lib Scot* In a letter from Brighton on 13th September Walter says he has been deputed to attend shortlv a Court Martial at Ipswich "For the present we are quartered upon Mrs Jobson who has a very good house on the New Steyne I have got a small Roman pot and a silver ring for you [i.e. Scott] from a Dr Forbes of Chichester which I shall bring down with me" On 5th October he writes to Anne "Jane is fattening on Shrimps Prawns and bottled porter, and the old lady herself is in an awful state of pinguitude—positively shakes the room when she walks across it and her sitting down endangers the beams & rafters of the house Has any thing been heard of Mrs Carpenters motions, has she gone off to India by wav of a morning sail or is she in Europe Asia Africa or America? '—*Walpole Collection* For another reference to the Court Martial see Vol XI, p 242

so so The Fo is still crippled but bears up boldly He puts me in mind of Burns's Tam Samson

Ower mony a weary hagg he limpit  
And aye the other shot he thumpit

He left us on thursday Sophia is better but still in pain and not much disposed to admit that she is mending Missie MacDonald like a good samaritan has come to assist Anne in nursing her I am very sorry to find you are still vexd by occasional returns of this vile cough I believe the south of France would be a much better place to spend your winter than our hard climate The long promised £200 will be ready in the beginning of next month and I will send you a bill for it The new edition of the novels goes on better than our most sanguine expectations and as it has now had a fair trial of six volumes I may hope if God spares me life and health for no one could supply my place at the helm my fortunes will be completely repair[ed] Should the Colonelcy open an year hence or so I will be able to give a good lift The woods here have been very flourishing but I have sufferd a little from the wind I have put them to rights howeve[r] If you come down which after all may be a rash thing though it would abstractedly from consideration of health give me the greatest possible pleasure I rely on your keeping the inside of coaches and travelling only by day You are old enough to know the value of health and the disagreeable discipline of Sir Andrew<sup>1</sup> and a little precaution for a time may confirm your health for years

My kindest love to Jane—her wood calld Janes wood is succeeding admirably We have had the usual<sup>2</sup> tide of company during the touring months but they are now fortunately a little abated for Sophias illness made it a worrying interruption I suppose Lockhart is by this time in Edinburgh and Charles is like to be there very soon We cannot make [out] your stranger unless we

<sup>1</sup> i.e. Sir Andrew Halliday, for whom see Vol. XI, p. 183 and note

<sup>2</sup> "Usually" written, we amend

know more of her Miss Crumpe sent me a flourishing letter with her last babe to which I sent as flourishing a reply I think Tom Campbel<sup>[1]</sup> had fallen in fancy with her<sup>1</sup> for he wrote a most earnest entreaty to Jeffrey to treat her favourably By the way while talking of books you have only to send your address by coach to Messrs Simkin and Marshall Booksellers Stationers Court Saint Pauls and they will forward them to you regularly there are six volumes now publishd I am much obliged to Doctor Forbes for the ring and urn you mention My time is now coming for my walk I write about four hours in the day and walk tw[o] or three which I find relishes a segar and a gill of Glenlivet rarely I never enjoyd better health—except what must needs be that I feel every year takes away a little activity I do not believe I would venture on Saint Kevans bed<sup>2</sup> now But when I can no longer get a long walk I will take a poney & garden chair & keep the greenwood in that way

My most respectful compliments attend Mrs Jobson and once more kiss Jane for me The game has been rather scarce but we have some blackcocks notwithstanding I should suppose Charles's gun might serve you without bundling down your own Always your affectionate father

WALTER SCOTT

10 October [1829] ABBOTSFORD

[Law]

To J W CROKER

MY DEAR CROKER,—I return the proof no correction being necessary so far as I am concernd but a line on my own note about R Arbuthnot only so far essential as to correct it with respect to the name of my late friend which was *William*<sup>3</sup> not Robert

<sup>1</sup> See Vol XI, p 314 and note 3    <sup>2</sup> See Vol IX, pp 192 200 *passim*

<sup>3</sup> For whom see Vol XI, pp 243 44 and note On 2nd November Croker had asked for a note on Lord Gardenstone—"he was a flighty man, I think, turned Jacobin & died by his own hands He was a humourist

Respecting Boswells mother & his brother I cannot get exact information untill I go to Edinburgh but will write you on the 12th current all I can learn from good authority on that subject

I think, nay am pretty sure, Veronica died very young I remember perfectly the unfortunate person you mention She was the eldest daughter of Boswell at least the eldest surviving & was what you say But I think her name was *not* Veronica

I cannot find your reference about the Nonjuring parson but the phrase was commonly used for a clergyman of the Episcopal form who did not take the oaths to government—a Jacobite Episcopalian a church now no more If you will place a cross at the passage where explanation is wanted it will facilitate my power of discovering it for my eyes by candlelight are now weak I shall be in Edinburgh on the 12 current which will greatly increase my power for the knowlege we possess of families is usual[ly] provincial & I live far from Ayrshire I can find however all you are like to want in the Parliament House (our Westminster Hall) and from the best authority

I do not much incline to say a great deal about poor Lord Gardenstone In his youth he was a determined Whig & took arms for King George in 1745 but was *captivated* by Roy Stewart the day before the battle of Preston He was a good deal of a bon vivant and liberal to profusion in public affairs I remember shewing you

Who was Boswell's Mother? It was about *her* I asked when you answered me as to Lady Eglintoun Poor *Veronica* was a *drunken prostitute* that is she was mad See 19th Augt What does he mean by a *nonjuring* Clergyman? I suppose an *episcopalian*—if so he was both a non juror & in Scotland a dissenter"—*Walpole Collection* Boswell's mother was Euphemia, daughter of Col John Erskine of Alloa In 1769 Boswell married his cousin, Margaret, daughter of David Montgomerie of Lamsshaw They had three daughters, Veronica (1773 95), Euphemia, and Elizabeth See Croker's *Boswell's Johnson*, II, pp 262 3 and note 2, III, p 494 and note 1, and F A Pottle, *The Literary Career of James Boswell, etc* (1929), p xliii For other references to Lord Gardenstone see George Colman, the Younger, *Random Records* (1830), II, p 79, and Dean E B Ramsay, *Reminiscences of Scottish Life and Character* (twenty second edition, 1874), pp 149 151 Veronica, who tended her father in his last years, died a few months after him

St Bernards well in the valley of the Dean He erected it at his own expence for about £1500 He got I believe in his love of notoriety implicated with a man named Thomson Callendar who wrote some letters signed Bombardimon for which he was accused of High treason Lord Gardenstone was in the course of an investigation concerning them judicially examined & soon after died Report assignd to him a Roman death but perhaps without reason I think the less is said on the subject the better for whatever his political errors might be Old Frank Gardenstone was a benevolent and liberal man & the times when he lived were very violent and may have done him injustice

You may depend on my returning the proofs with all the haste which an answer to your questions will permit

Yours faithfully to command

ABBOTSFORD[D] 5 *November* [1829] WALTER SCOTT

Pray let a runner throw the inclosed into the 2d post

[*Yale Univ Lib*]

To JOHN WILSON CROKER

DEAR CROKER,—I have been detain'd in the country The slips return'd are the same before sent so I do not replace one or two trifles which I mark'd down & only correct those sent on these latter pages

Sir James Boswells address is Auchinleck by Mauchline Ayrshire NB Your best way is to write to him personally

Your remark on the Gaelick language is not quite correct The names of all recent improvements are as you justly say derived from other languages & transferr'd to the Gaelick But on the other hand names expressing original and primary ideas must have been current in their own language & are probably derived from some more ancient modification of the Celtic language They must have had a name for a *port* so soon as they could sail a

canoe and the root of the phrase is transferd from the Celtic to the Roman So are most of the words you bring forward as evidence on the opposite side They have not borrowd from foreigners any word to express King They use the word R<sub>1</sub> derived from Rex and found in all languages derived from the Celtick either directly or through the latin There is no foreigner can pronounce the word *cow* as the highlanders use it It is however derived from Bos The romans could not make them acquainted with these animals & so dictate their names They found the Gael in possession of flocks herds boats &c and calling them by the same names or names similar to those which their ancestors had derived from the Celtick language once generally spoken in Europe

I am promised Boswells pedigree in a day or two I think that is all at present Yours truly

W S

I noted that I recollect a young officer [John MacDonald] about 1796 who was said to be a son of Flora [MacDonald] by Kingsburgh I will enquire about this

[November 1829]

[*Nat Lib Scot*]

TO CHARLES TILT, BOOKSELLER, 16 FLEET STREET,  
LONDON

SIR,—I have very ungraciously left unacknowledged your present of the Landscape illustrations of Waverley<sup>1</sup> I pretend to no knowlege of art so my opinion ought to go for nothing But I think they are very beautiful and sincerely hope they will answer the purpose of the artists and publishers I remain Sir Your obliged humble Servant

[PM 14 May, 1830]

WALTER SCOTT

[*Mrs Basil Holmes*]

<sup>1</sup> On 14th April Tilt says he offers for Scott's acceptance "the first number of the Landscape Illustrations of the Waverley Novels"—*Walpole Collection* See Vol XI, p 330 and note

TO JAMES BALLANTYNE

DEAR JAMES,—I am glad the machines do and hope you will keep them at it <sup>1</sup> I return the two proofs I am puzzled about one thing It is an account of an apparition which seemd to hover against a chapel window & proves to be the production of a singular reflection I must have seen it but I cannot re[c]ollect it at any rate no revise has reachd me but I would like to see it before thrown off Caddell writes me about the success of the machines and I give you joy It is easy to keep when footing is even gained Copy for the Tales tomorrow as I wish to correct it

[April-May 1830]

[Unsigned]

[Nat Lib Scot]

TO JOHN HAMILTON, SCHOOLMASTER, COLDINGHAM <sup>2</sup>

SIR,—I enclose a letter for your son which I leave open to your perusal A very good living might be got by a person perfectly a[c]quainted with both languages in the way I mention, but it would require great ability & some very alert Bookseller to assist on this side of the water I do not think the present translations which I return under

<sup>1</sup> See Vol XI, p 328 and note 1 For the apparition story, "communicated to me by the son of the lady principally concerned," see *Letters on Demonology* (1830), pp 390-91 In her youth the lady used to sit alone at night in her apartment in her father's house, which was at right angles to an Anabaptist chapel On two occasions, the second accompanied by her father, she saw "some aerial being against the arched window" of the chapel, its head surrounded by a halo A strict investigation, however, disclosed that the spectre was an old woman, who, carrying a lantern which 'threw up the refracted reflection of her form on the chapel window,' used to go out at night to gather cabbages in an adjoining garden

<sup>2</sup> A village near Eyemouth in NE Berwickshire On 16th February Hamilton writes that he sends with a letter from his son an old German book and a translation These have been delayed for some unaccountable reason at Rotterdam, and have been laid aside by Hamilton since last December as he did not know how to send them with least expense until now If Scott does not approve of the specimens sent, his son desires them to be returned They can be transmitted to Cadell — *Walpole Collection*



cover to Mr Cadell as you direct are of a nature like to be very interesting here which the translator chiefly looks to but among the immense number sent yearly to the Fair of Leipzig there are certainly novelties which would succeed in the British market Being very busy at present and in an indifferent state of health I am not equal to much correspondence but any thing which can be shortly asked & answered shall certainly be replied to If your son thinks of parting with the old German book on Enchantment I would be willing to pay for it at any reasonable price I return it with the translations & am Sir Your obedient Servant

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD BY MELROSE 26 Feb'y [1831]

[*Jedburgh Town Council*]

NOTE — *The following seven letters came into our hands after the miscellaneous group of Appendix letters had been set up, and, therefore, have not been inserted in the chronological sequence of that group*

TO OCTAVIUS GILCHRIST,<sup>1</sup> STAMFORD, LINCOLNSHIRE

DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your two letters & I hope you have ere now the Life of Dryden & Marmion which were forwarded some time ago by the Union Coach

Although I have considered Beaumont & Fletcher (critically speaking) a good deal I cannot think of inter

<sup>1</sup> Octavius Graham Gilchrist (1779-1823) the antiquary. He edited *The Poems of Richard Corbet* (1807) and published *An Examination of the Charges maintained by Messrs Malone, Chalmers, and others, of Ben Jonson's Enmity towards Shakespeare* (1808), the work to which Scott here refers. In 1814 Gilchrist printed proposals for a collection of Old English Plays, but this project was abandoned owing to C. W. Dilke's Continuation of Dodsley's *Select Collection of Old Plays*. Gilchrist had controversies with Stephen Jones and William Lisle Bowles and was a contributor to *The Quarterly Review*, Leigh Hunt's *The Reflector*, and John Scott's *The London Magazine*. He was a friend of John Clare, the Northamptonshire poet. For Scott on Henry Weber's edition of Beaumont and Fletcher see note, p. 291, and for Scott, Southey and Gilchrist see *Lockhart*, chap. xvi.

fering with your edition I find however my renouncing the idea will be a considerable disappointment to my friend Ballantyne who had made some arrangements with a view to it As it must be nearly the same to you whether you print in Edinr or London will you permit me to recommend him to so creditable a job—and if that can be considered as any inducement I will willingly contribute all the hints in my power & the few notes I have written out to the improvement of the Edition

I am greatly obliged to you for the pamphlet on the Jonsonian controversy I can only say as yet that you plead Ben's cause very well & remove a great superstructure of exaggerat[ion] and obloquy Yet I fear there was some dissension between him & Shakespeare though I am willing to suppose it went no farther than the natural emulation betwixt two writers each so eminent in a very different stile might occasion & even justify You are a little too severe on Drummond who probably never intended the "Heads of his Conversation" to see the light <sup>1</sup> It is odd that though his works containing doubtless these Memoianda are existing in a fair Ms in our Antiquarian Society I have never been able to keep them long enough in my hand to collate it with the printed Copy The Key is kept by a Banker who seems to thin[k] it of as much value as that of his strong box But I am promised admission ere long & will send Gifford the result

Excuse brevity I being calld upon to set out for the Highlands <sup>2</sup> for a day or two I hope to hear from you very soon & am Dear Sir Yours truly WALTER SCOTT

EDINR 9th June [PM 1808]

I am heartily sorry you should need to apply any steel but a razor to your physiognomy

[*Folger Shakespeare Lib*]

<sup>1</sup> For Scott's recalling Gilchrist's harsh judgment of Drummond see letter to David Laing, 29th December 1829, Vol XI, p 280, and also the notes on pp 279 81

<sup>2</sup> To Dunira, the country house of Lord Melville, near Crieff, and to Loch Katrine See Vol II, pp 71, 72

To [ROBERT GRAHAM ?] <sup>1</sup>

[Copy]

MY DEAR GRAHAM,—In the bustle of arranging some little matters at this place, I have put off from day to day writing to you about the Supporters and Mottoe. It now appears to me that two Highlanders of the same age would have a tame effect and argue a poverty of invention. I therefore in allusion to the exploits of the first Graeme against the Roman Wall,<sup>2</sup> would have on the dexter Side an ancient Caledonian proper holding a Roman eagle reversed, on the Sinister a modern highlander holding the imperial eagle of France also reversed. The Mottoe may be *Nunc sicut olim* or any thing similar. The only difficulty will be dressing the Caledonian whose costume I apprehend should be bare legs and arms, the feet in buskins of deerhide, the body loosely cover'd with the plaid beneath which appears some rude iron armour, beard, whiskers, and shaggy hair, a steel cap or bonnet with a single eagle's feather and a huge two handled Sword hung not by the Side but round the neck the handle appearing over the left shoulder. The Tartan was not I suppose so ancient as the time of the Romans but must be used nevertheless to designate the Country of the warrior. Heralds like poets are at liberty to commit Anachronisms for the sake of effect. I hope you will get this sketched with spirit, I shall be in Town in a week or ten days in case further counsel is wanted. I trust you will like my idea which I think unites happily the ancient fame of your Clan with the renown of a kinsman who so gallantly supports its honours.

I can add no more being in all the agonies of the Mortar

<sup>1</sup> The name of the correspondent to whom this letter was addressed is not given, but the recipient was Robert Graham of Redgorton, Perthshire, advocate, and a cousin of Thomas Graham Baron Lynedoch, to whom we find Scott writing later, on 18th July 1829.

<sup>2</sup> For an account of this see Sir George Macdonald, *The Roman Wall in Scotland* (second ed., revised 1934), pp. 33, 35.

tub If you have occasion to write be so good as address,  
care of Mr Erskine Melrose Yours truly

[1812]

[Signed] WALTER SCOTT

N B The modern highlander should be fully accounted  
as in 1745

[*Mrs Maxtone Graham*]

To JOHN JAMES AUDUBON<sup>1</sup>

DEAR MR AUDUBON,—I am sure you will find many  
persons better qualified than myself to give you a passport

<sup>1</sup> John James Audubon (1780-1851), the famous American naturalist. He came to Europe in 1826. After public exhibitions of his drawings at Liverpool and Edinburgh, he issued in 1827 the prospectus of his great work, *The Birds of America* (1831-39), and in 1828 went to Paris. Following a visit to America he returned to London, and finally settled in New York in 1839. On the same date as the above letter Audubon had written "On the eve of my departure to visit all parts of the island, and afterwards the principal cities of the Continent, I feel an ardent desire to be honoured by being the bearer of a few lines from your own hand to whoever you may please to introduce me. I beg this of you with the hope that my efforts to advance ornithological studies, by the publication of my collections and manuscripts, may be thought worthy of your kind attentions, and an excuse for thus intruding on your precious moments. Should you feel the least scruple, please frankly decline it, and believe me, dear sir, that I value highly my first reception, when presented to you by my good friend Captain Basil Hall, and your subsequent civilities." —ROBERT BUCHANAN, *Life and Adventures of John James Audubon* (1868), pp. 122-23. To his wife Audubon wrote from Edinburgh on 12th March 1827: "Sir Walter Scott has also been so kind as to give me a Letter that I may exhibit wherever I may go—I have Two Letters from him very kind—all this I think will afford thee great Pleasure." —F. H. HERRICK, *Audubon the Naturalist* (1917), i p. 370. "January 22 [1827]. A visit from Basil Hall, with Mr Audubon the ornithologist, who has followed that pursuit by many a long wandering in the American forests. He is an American by naturalisation, a Frenchman by birth, but less of a Frenchman than I have ever seen—no dash, or glimmer, or shine about him, but great simplicity of manners and behaviour, slight in person, and plainly dressed, wears long hair, which time has not yet tinged, his countenance acute, handsome, and interesting, but still simplicity is the predominant characteristic." *January 24*—Visit from Mr Audubon. This sojourner in the desert had been in the woods for months together. He preferred associating with the Indians to the company of the Back Settlers, very justly, I daresay, for a civilised man of the lower order—that is, the dregs of civilisation—when thrust back on the savage state becomes worse than a savage." —*Journal*, i pp. 343-4, 344-5. See also Maria R. Audubon, *Audubon and his Journals* (1898), i pp. 206-11, 216-17, and Constance Rourke, *Audubon* (1936), pp. 211, 212.

to foreign countries, since circumstances have prevented our oftener meeting, and my ignorance does not permit me to say anything on the branches of natural history of which you are so well possessed. But I can easily and truly say, that what I have had the pleasure of seeing, touching your talents and manners, corresponds with all I have heard in your favour, and that I am a sincere believer in the extent of your scientific attainments, though I have not the knowledge necessary to form an accurate judgment on the subject. I sincerely wish much your travels may prove agreeable, and remain, Very much your Obedient servant,

WALTER SCOTT

EDINBURGH, *March 8* [1827]

[*Life of J. J. Audubon*]

TO [THOMAS GRAHAM, BARON LYNEDOCH] <sup>1</sup>

MY DEAR LORD,—I should have immediately answered your kind letter but it may be some apology that I immediately acted in compliance with its contents. I could not notwithstanding the encouragement of my lively and enthusiastic friend Mrs Grahame<sup>2</sup> venture to invite the Duc de Chartres to this place since it would have implied a title to request such an honor and the means of discharging my duties as a Landlord with means becoming the sense I should entertain of the honour. But understanding the Duke was to be at Edinburgh I commissioned Monsr Laine<sup>3</sup> the French Consul to express with what readiness and pleasure should His Royal

<sup>1</sup> Thomas Graham, Baron Lynedoch (1748-1843), the famous general. He was Sir John Moore's aide de camp in the Coruña campaign, led a division under Wellington, and commanded the left wing at Vittoria. Scott paid tribute to Graham in *The Vision of Don Roderick*, Conclusion, stanzas xvi and xvii.

Probably the mother of Robert Graham, Thomas's cousin. Before her marriage to John Graham she was Mary Scott of Usan and had a great reputation for liveliness.

<sup>3</sup> "Laine, the Chevalier, French consul, 2 Coates crescent"—*Edinr P O Directory for 1829* 30

Highness desire to see Melrose Abbey or any thing in this part of the country I would contribute to his accomodation whatever my circumstances permit me to offer which would be at least better than a Scotch Inn and that I would be happy to be permitted the honour to shew the Lions of Melrose & the vicinity on so distinguisht an occasion and doing whatever else may be in my power to contribute to the gratification of his curiosity <sup>1</sup>

Mr Laine who is in correspondence with his Royal Highnesss suite undertook to make my respectful homage known to Him I find however the Duke de Chartres is gone north from Glasgow In his return from Edinburgh southwards I will be proud to offer him a gite and such wellcome as a Scotch country Gentleman can offer If Robert Grahame comes in his train I need not say how wellcome he will be The House here is pretty large and affords plenty of accomodation such as it is and old mutton and claret are not wanting

Most proud and happy should I be if Lord Lyndoch should at any time think it worth while to put my Brag to the test in person I am with the greatest respect My dear Lord Your Lordships most obedient humble Servt

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 18 July [*docketed* 1829]

[*Mrs Maxtone Graham*]

To J W CROKER

[Extract]

POOR Bozzie was but weak-nerved unlike Sir Alexander,<sup>2</sup> who had no idea of fear I remember the Laird of McNab, the caricature of a rough uneducated Highland chief, as savage and as absurd as you could conceive any breathing Christian, frightened Bozzy from Edinburgh for some time McNab, who was a great admirer of the fair sex, had nearly got himself noosed in the rat trap of matrimony by

<sup>1</sup> See p 466 and note 1    <sup>2</sup> i.e. the eldest son of Johnson's biographer

addressing a certain Miss Jessie Macfarlan in a stile so like that of a husband as had nearly made the consistorial court fix the character upon him      Boswell, who was counsel for Jess, proceeded in this manner      “ The defender in this case comes before your Lordships, a potent chieftain, who, in the wilds of Breadalbane, possesses the genial powers of Asia, and who, on the top of the bleak<sup>1</sup> mountains of the north stands like the Turk with his doxies around him ” McNab was so incensed that he threatened to proceed *par voie du fait* [*sic*]      On which Bozzy emigrated (it was said) till Henry Erskine found means of pacifying the incensed chieftain      This was not accomplished till he came off victorious from the suit of Jess, on which occasion his delight with the lawyers who had saved him from the scrape was so great that, being short of money, which was apt to be the case, he caused a herd of highland kyloes<sup>2</sup> to be driven into the Parliament Square for the acceptance of the learned counsel      Imagine such a scene in front of Westminster Hall !      A dozen of wild shaggy bullocks and three or four gillies as savage as themselves asking for the Laird’s lawyers, with no further instructions than that the Laird had told them arry one of the gentlemen would care of their own      Great was the mirth occasion[ed] by this mode of fecing in kind      But the Butcher market was at no great distance, and I believe the herd found its way there after some slight conversation between the gentlemen in black gowns and those in blue sleeves      All this is foreign to your purpose      I do not know why an old tale drags on another

[*unsigned*]

[1829]

[*Yale Univ Lib*]

<sup>1</sup> Scott seems to have begun to write “ cruel, which he abandoned for “ bleak ”

<sup>2</sup> i.e. Highland cattle

TO JAMES MACCULLOCH OF ARDWALL,<sup>1</sup> CANONGATE  
JAIL [EDINBURGH]

MY DEAR ARDWALL,—I felt sincerely sorry at receiving a letter from you with a date so very melancholy but if a man were only to shew his manhood in fair weather I should give little for his fortitude I know by experience of my best friends and sometimes by my own that the storm of adversity is the best touchstone by which to try our real value and that the true merit of a man consists in his not being what Shakespeare so well calls a “pipe for fortunes finger” Sincerely hoping that you will suffer nothing in health from this unpleasant restraint I look on it in other respects as the mark of a decided resolution more painful to take than even when you are executing it and which puts an end at once and for ever to a long succession of worryings arising out of affairs in which you can have no just blame Every night you lie down is a portion of care off your mind and when your melancholy month is accomplished I will hope soon to see you at freedom If I had had an idea that you were not instantly to be called to town I should have detained you with us whether you liked it or not for surely there is room enough in the house for both to follow their avocations & meeting at meals or hours of recreation as Robinson Crusoe says to our exceeding refreshment So when you can spare us the promised visit do not let it be limited by any notion that it will be inconvenient to me for I will just go about as if I was totally alone and there is no chance whatever of company unless just at the Christmas season when you

<sup>1</sup> For James Murray MacCulloch, brother of Mrs Thomas Scott, see Vol VII, p 356 and note ‘Poor Ardwall your [cousin ?] has had some very hard cards I admired the practical philosophical [manner] with which he bore his misfortun[e]s & have the pleasure of being of some use to him though much less than I willingly would His firmness and spirits were exemplary & his case a very very hard one’—Vol XI, p 480 with note 3 About this case there have come to us recently from the same source four of Scott’s letters, of which we print the one of greatest interest



would not be sorry to see a little reinforcement of Scotts &c to our beef and pudding that old customs may not decay

Mr Nairne has acted a very kind & friendly part and I have no doubt will perfect it Anne sends her kind compliments and I am always My dear Ardwall most truly yours

WALTER SCOTT

ABBOTSFORD 29 November [docteted 1830]

A true November day of mist and drizzle But how sincerely I wish I could exchange your prsnt habitation for this fireside even though it be litterd up by my large stag hounds who look very much out of spirits

[Cliff-McCulloch]

To JOHN PAYNE COLLIER <sup>1</sup>

ABBOTSFORD, August 27, 1831

DEAR SIR,—I safely received, some weeks since, your very interesting volumes upon dramatic antiquities, and have to thank you very much for the information and curiosity which I have derived from them I should long since have assured you of this, but my medical friends, till of late, have restricted me chiefly to vegetables and

<sup>1</sup> John Payne Collier (1789 1883), the Shakespearean critic The work about which Scott writes is Collier's *History of English Dramatic Poetry to the Time of Shakespeare and Annals of the Stage to the Restoration*, 3 vols (1831) Collier had been introduced to Scott by Thomas Campbell, the poet, a year or two previous to the date of this letter He became librarian to, and pensioner of, William George Spencer Cavendish, sixth Duke of Devonshire (1790 1858) On 24th August 1831, from "23 Hunter Street, Brunswick Sqre, London, Collier had written to inquire if a parcel he sent through Longman has reached Scott "It consisted of a book I have lately printed on the History of our old Dramatic Poetry & the Stage, a subject that I thought (and think) could not fail to interest you, and a work upon which I have spent not a few years of my life If it have arrived I shall be satisfied if it have pleased I shall be gratified"—*Walpole Collection*

water in point of diet, and in my studies are not desirous I should go beyond "Cinderella, or the Little Glass Slipper" I am, however, much better, and emancipating myself gradually from my restrictions

I have some thoughts of going in the winter to Italy, to try what a warmer climate will do for me In that case I will be anxious to trace the origin and progress of the Comedy of Character, where the use of a dramatic poet was in a great measure dispensed with, or at least only required in condensing the intricacies of a prepared plot, which the actors filled up according to their various characters previously fixed and settled

I am sure that when I am able to read your valuable dissertations with the attention they deserve, I shall find something throwing light on this curious subject, which would go far to decide the question whether mummery or masquery did not precede the proper drama in the infancy of that interesting art I am scarce sufficiently strong to enter upon the particulars at present I would willingly hear that you were not only encouraged to republish the "Annals of the Stage," but to meditate a complete history of Dramatic Art, as it took its rise in England, since as you yourself well observe it is a shame that while we justly set so much on our English Dramatic Poetry, we should at the same time suffer its history to rest upon the snatches of intelligence which have been gleaned together for the illustration of Shakespeare—an object, to be sure, most worthy in itself But rather I apprehend, it will not require less than the extensive knowledge which you have displayed on the subject to derive a general history out of the Annals which you have collected with such uncommon diligence and your accurate acquaintance with the Museum and the Duke of Devonshire's Collection has paved the way so far as to render the labour of doing so, however great to another, a mere trifle to you, as the erecting of a building is but a trifling labour when the collection of the materials has once simplified it

Pray, dear sir, be so good as accept a hurried and confused letter, as intended to convey the best thanks and assurances of interest in your labours from Your most obliged humble servant,

WALTER SCOTT

*[An Old Man's Diary, corrected from the Original  
in Folger Shakespeare Lib ]*

THE END



## SOME ADDITIONAL NOTES AND A FEW EMENDATIONS

THE circumstances in which the editing of Scott's letters has been carried out have added to the possibilities of error to which human nature is liable. We have printed, as indicated in the Preface to the first volume, from three sources, (1) original letters, which include the magnificent gift of Sir Alfred J. Law of Honresfeld to the National Library of Scotland, letters lent by His Grace the Duke of Buccleuch, letters purchased by the National Library, and individual letters lent by various persons. For errors in these we, and Sir Walter Scott's handwriting, must bear the blame. At first bold and clear, yet always presenting occasional words almost indecipherable, it grew increasingly difficult, as may be seen by a study of the *Journal*, a complete photostat of which is now in the National Library. From the first, too, Scott dated his letters either not at all, or by the day of the week, or often erroneously. Ellis comments once on the "pleasure I must have felt at reading on the 29th of September a letter written by you on the 24th of October." Scott makes this kind of mistake throughout his life. Some of our letters have, therefore, been misplaced. (2) Our second source has been copies of letters, including the transcripts made for Lockhart and now in the National Library, and copies sent to our publisher by various persons here and in America. (3) Our third source was letters already printed, by Lockhart in the *Life*, by Douglas in the *Familiar Letters of Sir Walter Scott* (1894), and in numerous other volumes.

Now, not infrequently, after we had printed letters from one or other of the last two sources, the original letter or a photostat (I reckon photostats with originals) came into our hands—lent for our work, purchased by the National Library, presented to that Library, or photostated for me in America. Thus, through the kind

intermediary of the Marquis of Inlithgow, we were allowed to consult in the Library the letters to Lady Louisa Stuart, now in the possession of the Duchess of Northumberland. The letters to James Skene, published by Basil Thomson in 1909, were presented to the Library by an anonymous donor. But invariably, when the originals were compared with the copies or printed texts we had used, errors, more or less important, were revealed.

But we have not always been able thus to get behind our first source, and conjectural emendation is a precarious task. We have not attempted here a complete list of errata, obvious or probable. All I here attempt is to note, for future biographers, such misdating of letters as later research made obvious, some of the errors revealed by the originals, a few obvious errors in copies that had escaped us, with a few notes on difficult points which had been overlooked or wrongly interpreted. Our first four or five volumes were somewhat hastened by the desire to be ready for the Centenary of 1932.

In avoiding, and later detecting, errors we are specially indebted to the care and kindness of Mr J G Tart, formerly Principal of the Central College, Bangalore. He has read all the proofs after those of the first five volumes. I should like finally to acknowledge my increasing debt, as the work went on, to Mr W M Parker. To him has fallen a large share in the closer reading of the proofs and he is responsible in the first place for many of the notes. We suffered a great loss by the death of Mr James Glen just a year ago. The help he afforded us in dating letters and explaining allusions was invaluable, and I had looked forward to his assistance in the composing of a short *Life of Scott*, written in the light of the many new facts, to supplement the great biography of Lockhart.

H J C G

EDINBURGH,

*February, 1937*

*Volume I*

The letter to James Ballantyne, pp 499 502, should be dated a year later, 1817, when Scott visited Glasgow and met Mr John Smith, the third of the firm See *Lockhart*, c 39

P xix, line 18, and p 98, line 8 The unknown correspondent was Richard Scougall

P xlii, for Renwick read 'Kermack

P 116, note 1, line 1 for *Early English Metrical Romances* (1805) read *The Early English Poets* (1801)

P 199 For the last sentence of note 1 read 'The poem is the *Recollections of Chatelain* extracted from *Fautz et dit de feu maistre Jehan Molinet* Paris, 1531, folio' See Ritson's *Ancient Songs and Ballads* (1829), I, pp 144 56, followed by Scott's translation

P 270, line 9, for '*Censure* read *Censura*,' i.e. the *Censura Literaria* (1805 9, 1815), of Sir Egerton Brydges See Vol III p 108

P 380 line 23, for 'Beatties read Bettys

P 393, note, lines 1 2, for this sentence substitute 'The poem mentioned in line 5 of text is 'The Spirit's Blasted Tree' (Note 4 G to *Marmion*) The 'doleful song' of lines 11 12 of text is 'Where shall the lover rest'

P 469, note the reference is to 2 *Henry IV*, v, 3, 91

*Volume II*

The letter to Robert Surtees on pp 85 7 should have been dated 1807 along with that to Lady Abercorn, Vol I, pp 381 3, and that to the Duchess of Buccleuch, pp 281 2, is printed, more correctly dated 1813, in Vol III, pp 238 9

P 4, 'Hawthornden, i.e. Drummond's *History of Scotland* (1655)

P 46 note, lines 14 end For brother read nephew, and for 'Chancellor read 'Chamberlain' The letter of the Chief Baron was *not* concerned with the theatre, but was to ask Lord Melville to get Scott appointed Secretary to the Commission See pp 32 and 59

P 63, line 12, 'The Fox,' i.e. Fox's recently published fragment of a History of the early reign of James II See p 31, line 4, and p 106, line 9 from foot

P 287, note 1, 'forms' is probably correct The phrase is used elsewhere by Scott

P 370, note 2, lines 5 6 As a fact the Duchess had a son in the summer of 1809

Pp 402-3 The queried words 'sharers' and 'carmining' are probably 'shearers' and 'careening'

*Volume III*

The following letters are misplaced pp 70 1, To Joseph Train should be dated 1815, pp 91 2, To the Duchess of Buccleuch should be dated 1813, as the reference to Napoleon shows that to James Ballantyne, p 178, must have been written not long before 20th September See p 162, To Lady Louisa Stuart, p 179, To John Ballantyne should date 1815, p 195, Scott has written 'Nov' for 'Oct' This letter should precede that of 16th November, pp 454 5, This fragment dates properly 1812 as the reference to Steele's box and Judge Brackenbridge's poem shows

P 61, line 19, read 'my dress from your ore

P 104, line 3, after own Scott or the copyist has dropped 'country men

P 180, note last line of quotation For emendationis read probably 'emendaturis' Ovid *Tristia*, iv 10 61 2

Multa quidem scripsi sed quæ vitiosa putavi  
Emendaturis ignibus ipse dedi

P 231, lines 14 17 should probably run and who will now dare to be heve &c We printed from a copy

P 321, note The reference is more probably to the final settlement of the debts due to Scott's father settled this year after an elaborate procedure to recover a debt due by the trustees of Scott of Scotshall in Shetland, which depended again on the discharge of a wadset resting since the seventeenth century on the property purchased in 1765 by the great great grandfather of the present editor See the Trust Minutes of Walter Scott, W S, now in National Library of Scotland

P 448, To Matthew Weld Hartstonge, line 4 read 'professors in Laputa'

P 455, line 26 After gospels Scott had written in original 'as the clown says of madness' See *Twelfth Night*, Act V, sc 1, 279

#### Volume IV

The following letters are misdated p 7, To Daniel Terry, 'Januy' should be 'July,' and that to the same at p 41 should date 1814, being the letter referred to in that to John Richardson, Vol III, p 422 pp 57 8, 10 John Richardson should date March 1820 See Vol VI, p 169 third paragraph pp 400 1, To Unknown Correspondent (i.e. William Scott, Northumberland Street, Edinburgh) belongs as P M shows to 1820

The letters to the Clephanes were known to us only in copies and several misreadings of the copyist have got past us We note some of the more important p 45, line 17, for 'early' read easily, p 49, line 3 from foot, for 'cruel' read probably civil, p 50, line 11 for 'comptoreal' read 'comptant', p 65, line 1, for 'corning' read 'carving' unless Scott is using the word as meaning 'cutting into small pieces granulating' (see *NED*), p 170, line 12, for 'mistified' read mortified p 172, line 16, for 'Muidyart' read Moidart, see p 331, p 173 (To Hurstonge), line 2 from foot, for 'increasing' read unceasing, p 178, line 3 from foot, for 'words' read winds, p 209 line 9, for 'fuirish' read 'feverish' line 11, for 'mutual' read 'medical', line 24 for 'pëging' read 'pigmy,' and in last line for 'turn' read 'term' The originals of the Skene letters came late to our hand They too reveal many errors in the edition we had printed from, e.g., p 165, line 13, for 'seen' read 'run' What sort of pigs might have run through the bargain

P 248, second paragraph 'The new Prince George of Denmark' is, of course, Prince Leopold of Saxe Coburg who married the Princess Charlotte

P 259, line 9 'The Bart' is probably Sir James Nasmyth whose debt to the estate of Scott's father Hay Donaldson had succeeded in getting cleared in October 1817 (Trust Minutes of Walter Scott, W S, Nat Lib Scot)

P 444, third paragraph, 'that coarse minded scoundrel Smith' The publication of this letter by Lockhart called forth the protest of many Whigs Crabbe Robinson wrote to Wordsworth, in 1838, justifying Southey on the



ground that he had sent all his letters to Lockhart without remembering this one, and had not wished it to be published 'The contents of the letter are I am assured substantially false I do not recollect such an accumulation of dishonourable productions consequent on the decease of eminent persons as we have witnessed since the death of Coleridge, Lamb and Wilberforce That Smith did not treat his Highland hosts as Scott describes is borne out by the diary of his wife which is full of praise of Scotland, the scenery, the manners, and the hospitality So I am informed by Lady Stephen, Hale, Fordingbridge, Hants, the great granddaughter of Smith, who is preparing a short Memoir Her letter reached me after this volume was issued

P 492 note, for 'Heart of Midlothian' read 'Rob Roy

P 509, line 20, for 'Riccelli' read 'Riddell

#### Volume V

P ix, line 25 The unknown correspondent, here and at p 309, is Alexander Young of Harburn

The following letters are misplaced pp 6 7, To William Blackwood The letter to Charles Sharpe (pp 207 9) should probably come in just after this letter, not a year later as we have given it, pp 402 4, this letter was written on the same day as that to James Ballantyne, Vol VI, pp 4 5, which should have come in here, p 404, To John Ballantyne The reference to the smack shows that this letter dates Dec 1819 or Jan 1820

P 41, To the Duke of Buccleuch Lockhart has extracted this letter from that of 25th May (pp 153 8) and has dated it explicitly '7th January 1818,' wishing, it may be, to antedate the discharge of the Duke's bond The correspondence of Cadell with Constable shows clearly that the bond was taken over by them in the end of 1817 but on the express condition that they should not have to find the money till Whitsuntide This was part of the bargain about the second series of *Tales of my Landlord*

P 80, line 9 from foot, for 'Land laws' read 'Laidlaws'

P 92, note 2, line 1 For 'George Thomson' read 'George Grieve' See p 73, note 2

P 146, note For second last sentence substitute 'Terry married Elizabeth Nasmyth on 25th June 1815 and Scott's godson was born in 1816' We were misled by the *DNB*

P 279, line 12 For 'charm' read 'chain'

P 388, line 12 For '*carmina cum melius*' read '*carmina tum melius*' See Virgil, *Ecl* ix, 67

cum venerit ipse canemus

*Carmina tum melius*

P 394, line 12, for 'D of G' read 'D of Y', i.e. of York

P 430, note 2 For 'Erskine the lawyer' read 'Erskine the colleague of Robertson in Greyfriars' See *Guy Mannering* chap xxxvii

P 480, line 11 'Macleods', so given by Basil Thomson The original gives 'Maclean Clephanes'

#### Volume VI

The letter to Skene, p 323, belongs to the year 1823 when Sophia's baby had influenza, Vol VII, p 381, that to James Ballantyne, pp 4 5, dates 4th July 1819

P 226, note 2 For 'Everyman out of his Humour' read 'Every Man in his Humour'

P 264, line 8, 'Ken', so Basil Thomson, the original reads 'Rose'

P 275, last line, for 'Sir James Soulis' read 'Sir James Foulis'

P 309, line 5 from foot for 'Copagne (?)' read 'Cossaque' See p 302, line 2

### Volume VII

P 161 For 'G Anderson Esq, &c' read 'D M Adamson Esq, 68 High Street, Newburgh, Fife'

The following letters are misdated p 42, To John Richardson This letter should come in before that to Rose of 18th December 1821, p 38, as the mention of Walter shows, p 129, Scott has dated 'April' for 'June', as the reference to Abbotsford shows See p 181 I must set out there tomorrow (To Sir Thomas Lauder), p 372, To James Skene, should be dated 1822 and come in at p 131 as the reference to the election of the collectorship shows and that on p 381 is docketed on original Mr Walter Scott 30 April 1819 which is the date of the dirty burgh contest Sir William Rae was appointed Lord Advocate in 1819

The Skene originals reveal other errors p 152, line 5 from foot, for 'rickyard' read 'orchard', p 160 line 4 from foot of letter for 'delicate arches' read 'delicate touches', p 156, line 4, read 'not well certainly if he can help himself To the break &c' p 294, line 4, the illegible words are 'bestowed on exterior decoration'

P 94, note 1 Add *The Spiritual Quixote* of Richard Graves

P 138, line 3 from foot, for 'Your Lordship' read 'His Lordship' i.e. Lord Hermand

P 160, line 9, 'Camul with the axe' See Ridley's *Tales of the Genii* in Weber's *Tales of the East* III (1819) p 502—Where is Camul? said the visitor—He watches, replied the slaves, with the axe in his hand

P 169, line 4 from foot, for 'Spain' read probably 'Spaw'

P 185, line 28 for 'Houses' read 'Thanes' *Macbeth* V 3, 49

P 209, line 3, for 'glass' read 'gloves' See p 187, line 6

P 326, line 15 For 'securities' read 'searches'

### Volume VIII

The letter to James Ballantyne at pp 96 7 belongs to the end of June See p 26

P 16 For note 1 substitute 'They received this note at ten p.m. and immediately went round, and Maria in her letter to her aunt Mrs Ruxton gives a vivid account of their meeting'

P 227, line 9, read 'Aytoun spoke fairly out'

P 353, line 19, for 'a bed miss &c' read probably 'a led miss and a led doctor'

### Volume IX

P 19, line 24, for 'Unknown Correspondent' read 'Joseph Jamieson Archibald,' and so at p 280

P 42, line 5, for 'Maise' read 'heaven'

P 217 For note 1 substitute 'The young nephew is the young Morritt (Vol VIII, p 214) who was Charles's fellow pupil under Williams'

He went to Cambridge and on Scott's advice was sent into the army See Vol X p 175, To Lady Louisa Stuart

P 375, note 2 line 2, read 'I was particularly interested' So the MS of the *Journal* misread by Douglas

P 390, add to note 1, the reference is to Psalm xx 7

*Volume X*

P 95, To Lady Louisa Stuart, first line, read a sport

P 177, line 15, for 'Tickell [?]' read 'Tickle [toby's mare]' See *Tristram Shandy*, book III, chap xxxvi

P 187, line 7 from foot for 'Dryburgh' read 'Drygrange,' which explains the route of the drive The error is Scott's

P 231, line 2, for 'alternated' read probably 'attended'

P 387, line 17 for 'forth' read 'north'

P 391 The Latin lines should probably run

Dignus, dignus es

In nostro docto

though the docto are thus separated in the copy The reference is to the burlesque graduation ceremony at the end of Molière's *Malade Imaginaire* —

Dignus, dignus est intrare

In nostro docto corpore

The order is that of baronets here, not a very learned body

P 395, note 1 The cat is more probably that mentioned on p 383 and in the note there

P 401, note 2, for 'Morning Post' read 'Morning Chronicle'

P 405, line 16, read 'It is quite a particular case In all others I avoid &c

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VOLUME XII	1831-1832

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<sup>1</sup> Meantime it must remain uncertain whether some of the letters addressed by Sir Walter Scott to Miss Clephane were to Miss Margaret Maclean Clephane, later Marchioness of Northampton, or to one of her two younger sisters, Anna Jane Clephane or Williamina Clephane

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